



First-Year Freshmen Residential Requirement

51st Administration
President Charles H. Haston

September 19, 2014

Fellow Cougars,

Over the past six years we have witnessed a paradigm shift at the University of Houston. What was once an open access institution that catered to commuter students has transformed in to a Tier One institution with more students living on campus than any school in Texas, except one. Although we have made great strides over this same period, and today, significantly more students are graduating, we still have a lot of work to do. It is our aim to help students excel by helping them graduate, and equally as important graduate on-time. Our data at the University of Houston shows a strong correlation between student success and living on campus.

Students who live on campus:

- **Take more Credit Hours**
- **Have a higher GPA**
- **Have a higher Retention Rate**
- **Are more likely to Graduate and Graduate On-Time**
- **Save Money**

What is more, is that while these benefits hold true for all of our students, the benefits are especially pronounced for our African American and Hispanic students.

The Student Government Association is introducing this proposal to require freshmen to live on campus because we believe that the University of Houston has a responsibility to its students to create an environment in which students will be most successful. Freshmen housing requirements are hardly unique- twenty-one universities in Texas alone have a similar requirement. However, we recognize that while this policy may contribute to the success of many students, there is the possibility that it could hinder the success of others.

Incoming freshmen who:

- **Live at home with their parents in Harris or surrounding counties**
- **Are Married or Have Children**
- **Or Have ANY reason that this policy is counterproductive to their success at the University of Houston**

...will be exempt from this policy

Additionally, this proposal calls for a \$1 million scholarship fund to be formed before this policy goes in to effect.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Haston

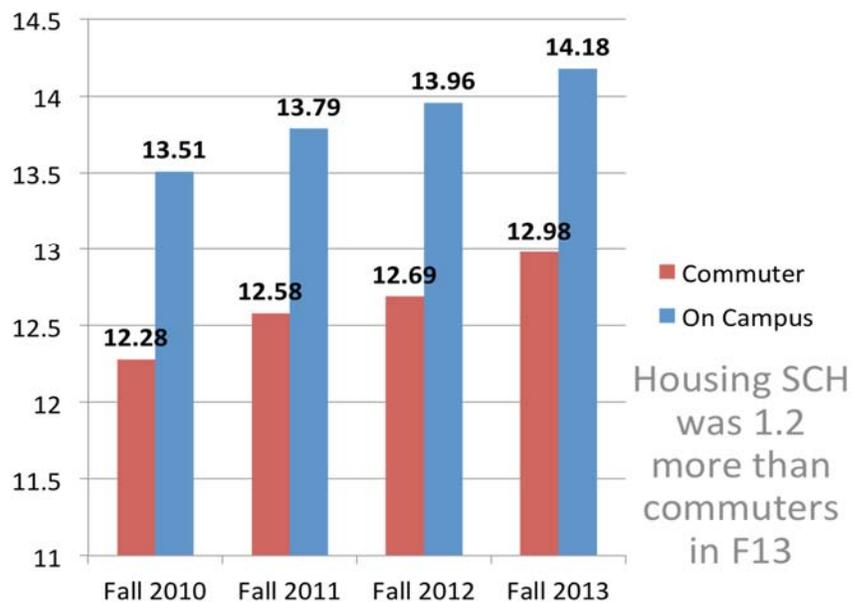
Student Body President



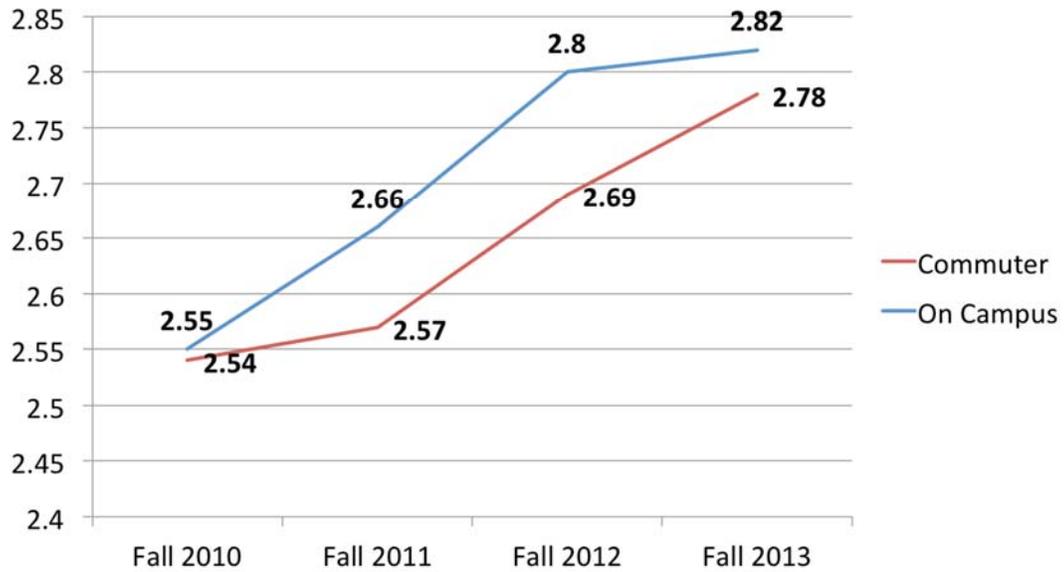
Reasons For Living on Campus:

Data shows students who live on campus during their first year of college are more inclined to excel beyond their peers who commute. They are less likely to withdraw from school and are more apt to graduate within four years or less, as shown in the figures below.

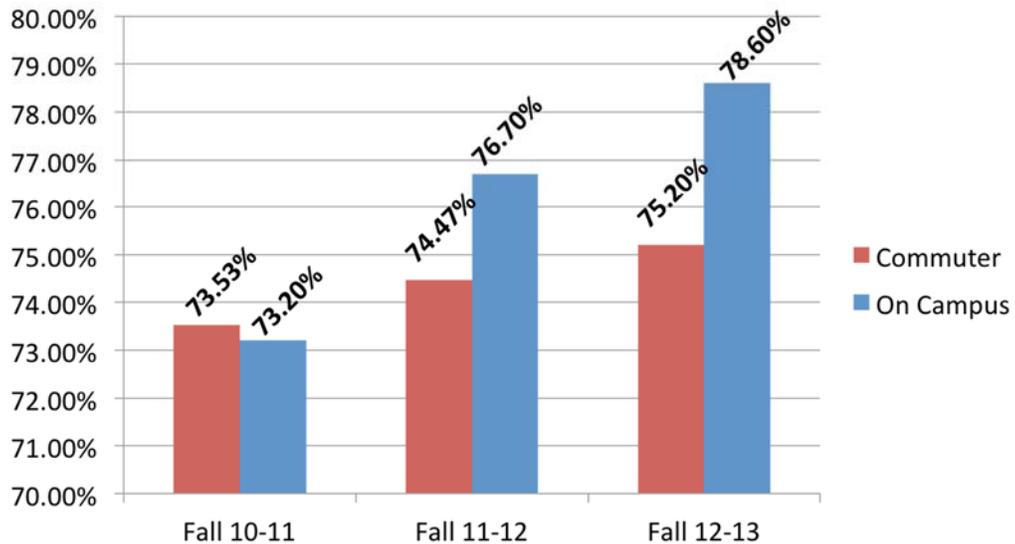
Freshman Student Credit Hour



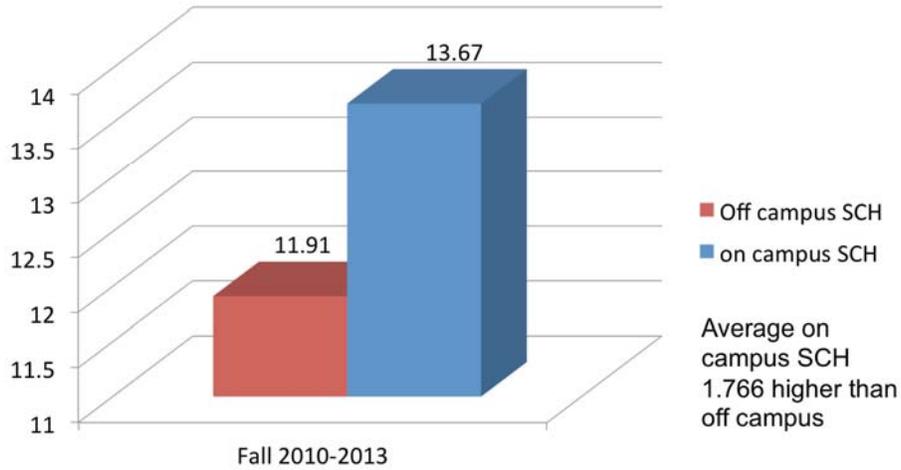
Freshman Cumulative Fall GPA



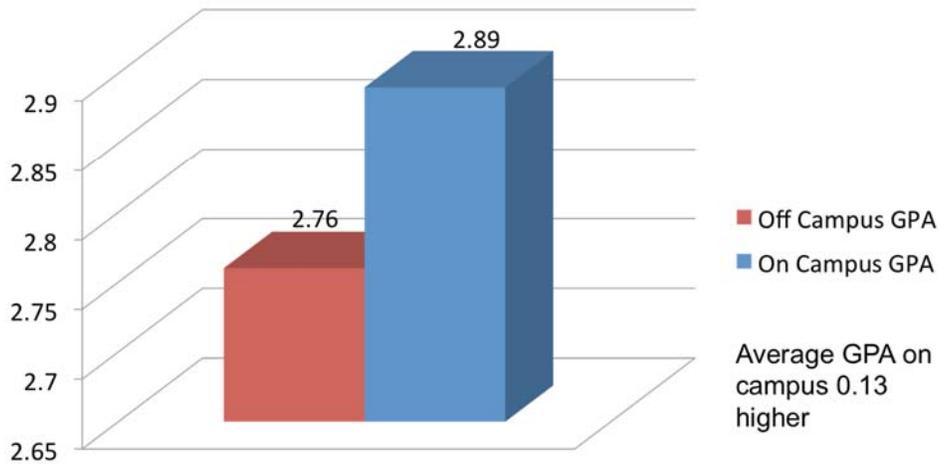
Freshman Retention Rate



Average Student Credit Hour 2010-2013



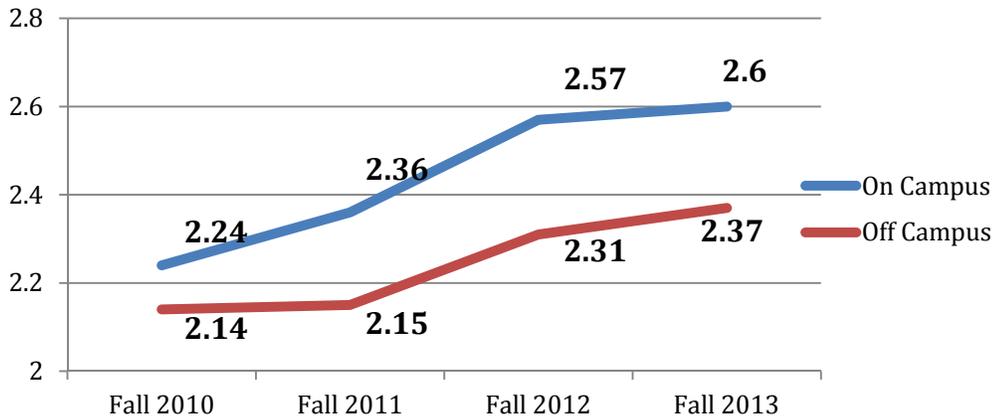
Average GPA 2010-2013



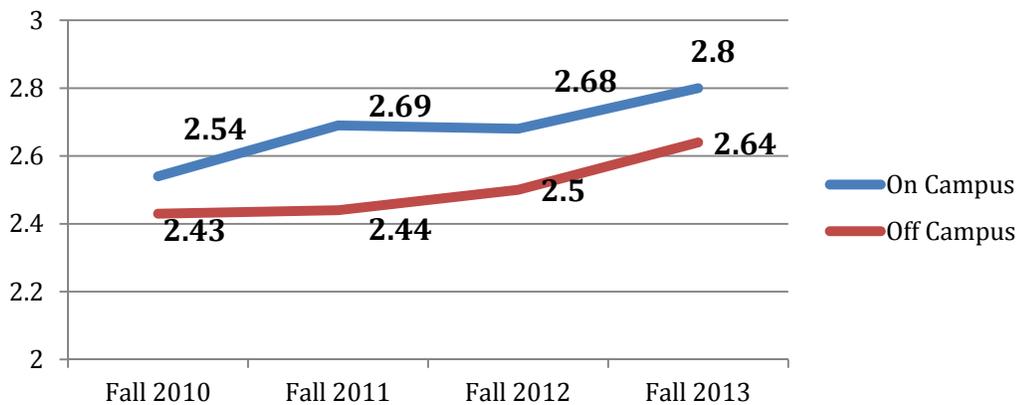
Academic Benefits of Living on Campus by Demographics:

University data shows minorities are more inclined to excel in their studies by living on campus, as show in this graph:

Cumulative GPA Comparison for African-Americans



Cumulative GPA Comparison for Hispanics



At least 21 Texas schools have live-on requirements

**Angelo State
Baylor University
Houston Baptist University
Midwestern State
Sam Houston State
Southern Methodist University
Stephen F. Austin State
Sul Ross State
Tarleton State
Texas A&M Commerce
Texas A&M Galveston**

**Texas A&M Kingsville
Texas A&M Texarkana
Texas Christian University
Texas State San Marcos
Texas Tech
Texas Woman's University
University of North Texas
University of Texas at Tyler
University of Texas Pan America
West Texas A&M**

Data collected by Texas State Institutional Research, 2013

Financial Benefits to Living on Campus:

Our data shows that living on campus is more affordable than living off campus. The average cost of living off campus—not with a parent—is \$6,750 per semester. That's compared to the \$5,860 residents pay to live on campus per semester. Thus, making the overall savings each school year to be approximately \$1,780.

According to Allstate, to commute in Houston traffic five days a week, for an entire year, costs approximately \$6,000. Living on campus saves students the time and money it takes to travel to and from school in Houston traffic.

Who Would Be Required to Live on Campus?

First time in-college freshmen; "FTIC freshman" is defined as a first-year student who is entering UH in the Fall or Spring semester after high school graduation, regardless of entering with or without "college credit."



Exemptions:

1. Available to a freshman who live at home with their parent or legal guardian, and their home is located within Harris County, or any contiguous county.



Harris County and Contiguous Counties

2. Freshmen who are married and/or have children are also automatically exempt from the policy.
3. Freshmen who can demonstrate any reason that the requirement would be counterproductive to their success at the University of Houston.



Requests for Waivers:

Written requests must be submitted to Student Housing & Residential Life by the deadlines as follows:

- **Fall Term—May 1**
- **Spring Term—November 1**

Requests for waivers must be submitted in writing to Student Housing and Residential Life. A joint panel of students (appointed by the Student Government Association), staff, and faculty should review requests for waivers. If the request is not heard within a reasonable period of time, the request should automatically be approved.

Requests should be reviewed by a five-member appeals committee, which should consist of three students and two faculty or staff members. In the event that the request is not approved by the committee, the student should have the right to request that the Director for Student Housing and Residential Life review the decision. The Director for Student Housing and Residential Life, as well as the Vice-President for Student Affairs should have the ability to grant waivers at their discretion.

Gauging The Requirement's Success:

The University will know the requisite is achieving its targeted objective if: (1) freshmen retention rates rise, (2) students' overall academic performance (GPA) is improved, (3) students graduate at a higher rate and do so within six-years

Scholarship Fund:

For most students, living on campus is more affordable than living off campus. However, to mitigate the potential for a situation where this is not the case, a one-million dollar scholarship fund would be established before this mandatory residency requirement goes into effect.

