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 into 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Commuter</th>
<th>On Campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>12.28</td>
<td>13.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>12.58</td>
<td>13.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>12.69</td>
<td>13.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>12.98</td>
<td>14.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Housing SCH was 1.2 more than commuters in F13
Freshman Cumulative Fall GPA

Freshman Retention Rate

Commuter
On Campus

Fall 2010 2.55
Fall 2011 2.54
Fall 2012 2.57
Fall 2013 2.69

Fall 10-11 73.53%
Fall 11-12 74.47%
Fall 12-13 75.20%
Average Student Credit Hour
2010-2013

- Off campus SCH: 11.91
- On campus SCH: 13.67

Average on campus SCH is 1.766 higher than off campus.

Average GPA
2010-2013

- Off Campus GPA: 2.76
- On Campus GPA: 2.89

Average GPA on campus is 0.13 higher.
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 shown in this graph:

**Cumulative GPA Comparison for African-Americans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>On Campus</th>
<th>Off Campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cumulative GPA Comparison for Hispanics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>On Campus</th>
<th>Off Campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

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.