

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
SYSTEM**

After careful consideration, we the members of The University of Texas System Student Advisory Council (SAC), respectfully submit the following recommendations to The University of Texas Board of Regents. These recommendations concern a wide variety of students at multiple institutions in The University of Texas System.

Academic Affairs Committee

Recommendation 1

The U. T. System Student Advisory Council is concerned that students may not be adequately involved in academic integrity disciplinary proceedings. As stakeholders in the integrity of our institutions and fellow students, we recommend that the Board of Regents facilitate student input in such proceedings. A possible solution is the inclusion of students on an advisory committee, which offers counsel to the dean of students or a designated hearing officer regarding sanctions imposed on students who have either admitted guilt or have been found guilty to a charge of academic dishonesty.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that the Board of Regents reinforce syllabi guidelines at all U. T. System academic institutions. The course syllabi, distributed by professors within the first week of classes, should include but are not limited to:

- The purpose and objectives of the course
- The semester in which the course is being offered
- Course prefix/number and title
- Course description in correlation with course catalog
- Prerequisites for course
- A list of required and recommended reading material and passages
- Class policies that pertain to grading, assignments, examinations, and absences
- Due dates for major assignments
- Professor contact information including email, phone number, office hours, and location
- Policies regarding student expectations
- Disability/Special accommodations statement
- A department or university honor code or statement of ethics
- An explanation or example of what constitutes plagiarism

Financial and Legislative Affairs Committee

Recommendation 3

The U. T. System Student Advisory Council recommends that each institution establish a service that educates the student population on financial literacy and financial management matters. This service

should target students in their first year of enrollment and should include financial literacy and financial management seminars that are performed throughout the year and a peer-to-peer type of educational advising system that counsels students on these issues.

Possible topics that should be covered include but are not limited to the following:

- Credit card responsibility
- Loan payment and consolidation
- Savings
- Budgeting
- Economic climate
- Consumer responsibility
 - Negotiation of loans
 - Insurance
 - Taxes
 - Liens
 - Investing
 - Bill payment
- Identity theft

Examples of these services are the Texas Tech University's Red to Black program and the University of North Texas' Student Money Management Center.

Health and Graduate Affairs Committee

Recommendation 4

Health insurance remains a critical problem for U. T. System students. In response to the 2007-2008 UTSSAC Recommendation 7, the Board of Regents suggested, "a health insurance survey be conducted for undergraduate and professional students." As a result, the 2008-2009 UTSSAC conducted a System-wide survey in order to better identify and represent the diverse opinions of students on issues pertaining to health insurance.

We recommend that U. T. System consider these survey results when negotiating the bidding process for student health insurance contracts and services provided through these policies.

Recommendation 5

Emergency situations stemming from natural disasters can affect students' accessibility to health care and student services. During Hurricane Ike, students from U. T. Medical Branch - Galveston were dispersed to campuses throughout the U. T. System. Some displaced students were unable to access needed medical attention and other student services at host institutions.

We recommend the Board of Regents ensure mechanisms are in place following a state of emergency that allow displaced students to receive adequate medical help and student services at any of the U. T. System campuses.

We also recommend that while this policy is in effect, it is well communicated to all involved students and healthcare administrators.

Student Involvement and Campus Life Committee

Recommendation 6

Environmental sustainability is an important issue for current and future students on all U. T. System campuses. The U. T. System Policy on Sustainability Practices promotes generalized goals but does not set comprehensive evaluation criteria and quantifiable standards such as those found on www.greenreportcard.org. This is evidenced by published reports where a “C” average was assigned to the only two evaluated UT institutions. We would like to improve our sustainability practices to work towards surpassing the standards set by our relevant competitors.

For example, GreenReportCard. org profiles and grades the sustainability efforts at 300 plus universities on the following categories: administration, climate change and energy, food and recycling, green building, student involvement, transportation, endowment transparency, investment priorities, shareholder engagement, and assigns an overall grade.

We recommend that The University of Texas System:

- take a more concerted action to promote environmentally responsible practices on each campus
- create an assessment tool (similar to www.greenreportcard.org) for evaluating each institution in order to gauge and promote progress towards environmentally responsible practices (Table 1)

Table 1: Sample Indicators used by the *College Sustainability Report Card* and
The University of Texas System Policy on Sustainability Practices

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| Administration |
| Sustainability Policies |
| Sustainability Staff |
| Green Purchasing Policies |
| Advisory Council |
| Maintenance of a Sustainability Department/Office |
| Website |
| Climate Change & Energy |
| Carbon Emissions Inventory |
| Commitment to Emissions Reduction |
| Energy Efficiency |
| Incentive Programs for Energy Conservation |
| Renewable Energy Purchase and Investment |
| Food & Recycling |
| Local Food |
| Organic and Sustainably Produced Food |
| Reusable Dishware and Eco-friendly To-go Containers |
| Composting Food and Landscaping Waste |
| Recycling Program for Dining Halls & Offices |
| Green Building |
| Green Building Policy and LEED Certification |
| Renovation and Retrofits |
| Student Involvement |
| New Student Orientation |
| Internships/Outreach Opportunities |
| Sustainability Challenges and Competitions |

- include students as members of the U. T. System Sustainability Steering Committee and each institution's sustainability committee
- increase transparency of sustainability practices by publishing progress reports on institutional and U. T. System websites on an annual basis