CONSTITUTION OF
The University Honors Council
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

RATIFIED: (September 27, 2017)
AMENDED: (September 30, 2018)
AMENDED: (May 31, 2019)
AMENDED: (October 17, 2019)
AMENDED: (January 3, 2020)
AMENDED (August 4, 2020)
RATIFIED: (August 6, 2020)

PREAMBLE

The University Honors Council at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is intended to promote the best interests and values of the Honors Program at the University of Texas at El Paso, which include but are not limited to community involvement, professional development and academic excellence; to act as the representative of the members of the University Honors Program and University Honors Council members at the University of Texas at El Paso; to provide a forum for discussion of general concerns, issues, and topics that affect our Organization; to coordinate semester activities and ensure adequate cooperation and unity among our Members; to better the Involvement of honors students at the University with inclusion programs designed to be open to the student population, which includes leadership within the community developed through volunteering and social awareness in the El Paso region; to uphold the values and respective policies of the Student Engagement & Leadership Center and; to uphold the values and mission statement at The University of Texas at El Paso in order to provide equal access and excellence to members of the Paso Del Norte Region. We, the members of the University Honors Council, in order to facilitate agreement and coordination; to formulate common objectives, to work for the common welfare of our Institution and our group; and to provide for a better understanding and formulation of policies, do hereby establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be known as the University Honors Council (hereinafter referred to as “UHC”).

ARTICLE II – STATEMENT OF UNIVERSITY COMPLIANCE

This organization is a recognized student organization at The University of Texas at El Paso and adheres to all campus policies as set forth in the Handbook of Operating Procedures as outlined by the Office of the Vice President for Business Affairs and the Registered Student Organization Handbook as outlined by the Student Engagement & Leadership Center at The University of Texas at El Paso.
ARTICLE III – UNIVERSITY POLICY

Section 1 Non-discrimination Policy

In accordance with Sec. 6-202(a)(3) of the Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities and Information on Students' Rights and Responsibilities, this organization may not deny membership on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, except that a registered student organization created primarily for religious purposes may restrict the right to vote or hold office to persons who subscribe to the registered student organization’s statement of faith; and a registered student organization may restrict membership based on the provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Section 2 Non-Hazing Policy

Hazing in state educational institutions is prohibited by both state law (Sections 51.936, 37.151 (5) and (6), and 37.155, Texas Education Code) and by the Rules and Regulations of The Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, Series: 50101, Section 2.8). Individuals or organizations engaging in hazing could be subject to fines and charged with criminal offenses. Additionally, the law does not affect or in any way restrict the right of the University to enforce its own rules against hazing.

Section 3 Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities at the university unless such programs and activities are specifically exempt from the law. The university is required to be in compliance with the provisions of Title IX. Therefore, compliance with Title IX is a condition to be a registered student organization at the university. Since passage of this law and the publication of the implementing regulations, the U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights has evolved a rather clear set of criteria for determining when single sex organizations are exempt from the provisions of Title IX. The criteria are as follows: the organization must have tax-exempt status under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code; members must be limited to students, staff or faculty at The University of Texas at El Paso; the
organization must be a "social fraternity" as defined by the Department of Education.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP AND ELIGIBILITY

Section 1  Texas Board of Regent’s Membership Statement

At the beginning of each academic year, each registered student or group must file with the appropriate institutional officer an affidavit stating that the organization or group does not, and will not during the year, have as a member any person who is not a student or a member of the faculty or staff of the institution.

Section 2  Composition of Student Organization

General Membership and voting rights for the UHC shall be granted to any student that complies with Section 1 of Article IV and who are in good academic standard per University Policy.

Section 3  Requirements for General membership

The requirements for General Membership, voting rights, good standing, and retaining membership, active members must:

A. Maintain at least a minimum 3.3 grade point average every semester per University Policy.
B. Pay all dues, fees, and fines required by UHC.
C. Attend a majority of general meetings called and mandatory meetings scheduled by UHC if circumstances permit it.
D. Participate in events and activities sponsored by UHC which require the presence of their active members.
E. Complete twelve (12) hours of community service per semester
F. Pay dues before the sixth general meeting.
G. Fundraising participation is required for all Members. Amount of participation determined at the discretion of the executive board.

Memberships of UHC members who fail to meet the aforementioned requirements will be revoked. (*The COVID-19 pandemic affected the function and participation of UHC members during the Spring 2020 semester and will continue to do so until Texas health officials deem it “safe” to resume University
Section 4  Revoking General Membership

General members to the UHC shall be revoked form individuals who fail to meet the requirements established in Section 3 of Article IV; or are found to be in violation of University policy including but not limited to Articles II, III, and IV of this constitution.

(*The COVID-19 pandemic affected the function and participation of UHC members during the Spring 2020 semester and will continue to do so until Texas health officials deem it “safe” to resume University operations. A General Meeting will be held to determine the requirements, level of participation/integration of UHC members for the upcoming semester)

Section 5  Associate and Honorary Membership

Individuals of the Paso Del Norte Region such as University faculty, members on probation, pre-honors, alumni, professionals, community members, etc. are encouraged to be involved and participate as non-voting Associate or Honorary Members. University Policy dictates that student organizations are to be student initiated, student led, and student run.

Section 6  Composition of Committees

General Members who are selected by the Executive Officers to serve on Special Committees, as the President Pro-Tempore or Parliamentarian for the University Honors Council must:

I.

A. Be a registered full-time student of The University of Texas at El Paso.
B. Have accumulated at least 12 credit hours unto their academic transcript.
C. Possess a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3 on the date of election and maintain the standard while in office.
D. Under special circumstances, if an officer position is vacant, other officers will elect the individual to fulfill the position otherwise the council elects the new officer.
E. Be Member of University Honors Program
ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1 Composition of Executive Officers

The elected officers of the University Honors Council shall be the President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of External Affairs, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Chair and Community Service Chair, Fundraising Chair, they shall hereafter be referred to as the Executive Officers. General Membership requirements continue to apply to those who pursue an officer position.

Section 2 Executive Board

The executive board consists of President, Vice President of Internal Affairs, Vice President of External Affairs, and advisor(s). The Executive Board completes the following:

I. 
   A. Oversees completion of requirements by executive officers.
   B. Creates the contracts that outline duties that should be completed by each officer.
   C. Responsible for giving a clear warning when requirements are being unfulfilled.
   D. Responsible for setting up a hearing for the officer that has not completed requirements after warning. At this hearing all executive board members will be present and the officer in review will present their argument as to why they shouldn’t be impeached.
   E. Executive Board will have a majority vote on the officer in review.

Section 3 Qualifications to hold office

General Members who choose to run are elected into an officer position must:

A. Be a registered full-time student of The University of Texas at El Paso.
B. Have accumulated at least 12 credit hours onto their academic transcript.
C. Members of the University Honors Program
D. Possess a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3 on the date of election and maintain the standard while in office.

E. Officers who fail to meet these requirements can appeal to stay as an officer with a special circumstance and can complete outside tasks to compensate for failing to meet the requirements.

Section 4 Removal of Executive Officers

Executive Officers may be impeached and removed from their position if an Executive Officer fails to meet the requirements established in Section 3 of Article IV, and the majority of the General Membership base votes for the impeachment of such officer. Executive officers may also be impeached, removed from their position, and face University consequences if found to violate University policy including but not limited to Articles II, III, and IV of this constitution. The Executive Officers of UHC will vote for impeachment if there is found to be a violation of University Policy and that of Articles II, III, and IV of this Constitution. In addition, if an officer fails to perform the duties specified in each officer’s contract, respectively, failure to perform such duties is grounds for impeachment. The Executive Officers will review the failure to perform the duties outlined in each executive officer’s contract. During the review of the failure to perform the duties outlined in each executive officer’s contract, evidence supporting the performance or lack thereof must be presented to the Executive Officers at a meeting. The Executive officers will review the evidence in support or against the performance of such duties or lack thereof by the executive officer(s) and vote to determine if such Executive Officer is impeachable for failure to perform the duties outlined in each executive officer’s contract, respectively.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section 1 Meetings

General meetings shall be held monthly during the academic year with two available sections covering the same content. This becomes accessible to the student population. Special meetings may be called by the President or a majority of the Executive Board. All members must be given a minimum of 48 hours’ notice prior to the meeting time.

ARTICLE VII – UNIVERSITY ADVISORS

Section 1 University Advisor
The University Honors Council shall have a University Advisor; the Advisor for this organization must be a current member of The University of Texas at El Paso faculty, staff, or administration. Advisor(s) once identified and selected shall serve on an academic year basis or until their successor has been selected. The Advisor shall hereafter recognize that University Policy dictates that student organizations are to be student initiated, student led, and student run and therefore serve in an advisory capacity to the organization but will have no vote on any issue.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCES

Section 1 Membership dues

The membership dues shall be appointed by the Executive Board every semester and should comply with the following:

A. Dues should be paid before the sixth general meeting
B. Dues shall be paid to the treasurer, president or vice president.
C. Members who have not paid their dues or special assessments by the due date shall be considered not in good standing and shall lose membership privileges, including voting, until the dues are paid.
D. Occasionally the University Honors Council may need to assess a fee or collect money from the membership for special events/purposes. The amount of money collected shall be determined by a majority of the membership at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Section 2 Dissolution of The University Honors Council

Should the student organization become inactive, any funds in their University cost center will be disbursed as outlined in Article X: Organization Assets. If the disbursement outlined in Article X is not feasible or applicable, the funds will be dispersed to the Student Engagement & Leadership Center.

ARTICLE IX – ELECTION

Section 1 Election Process

The UHC hereby adopts and incorporates “ARTICLE V: ELECTION PROTOCOL” outlined by the BYLAWS of The University Honors Council. The UHC bylaws state the method and process for Executive Officer’s elections.
ARTICLE X – ORGANIZATION ASSETS

Section 1 Disbursing Organization Assets

Should the UHC become defunct, all work, funds, and property controlled by the organization will be turned in to the University Advisor.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

Section 1 Amendments

Proposal for amendments to the Constitution must be presented in writing to the Executive Board before the General meeting in which the amendment is intended to be voted upon. Amendments to the Constitution require a two-thirds of executive officer’s vote to pass. A copy of any amendments made to this Constitution after its ratification must be updated and filed with the Student Engagement and Leadership Center and to the advisor.

ARTICLE XII – RATIFICATION

This Constitution shall become effective upon approval by the University Honors Council, with a two-thirds of executive officers and simple majority of the voting membership vote. As of August 4, 2020 this Constitution is valid, and will be used in reference by members of this organization and The University of Texas at El Paso, specifically the Student Engagement & Leadership Center.