



GRADUATE STUDENT ASSEMBLY  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

---

110 Inner Campus Drive, G0400 · Austin, TX 78712  
(512) 471 – 4511 · <https://graduatestudentassembly.utexas.edu/>

**Executive Summary**

**A.R. F25-02 In Opposition of the Implementation of Texas Senate Bill 37 at The University of Texas at Austin**

---

This resolution records the impacts of Texas Senate Bill 37 (SB 37) on graduate students at The University of Texas at Austin. SB 37 restructures faculty governance by requiring faculty councils to serve in an advisory-only capacity, places decision-making authority with presidents and governing boards, and mandates periodic reviews of curricula and programs. These changes weaken the University's long-standing model of shared academic governance and oversight, which is fundamental to maintaining educational quality. These changes directly affect graduate students. Graduate students rely on faculty governance bodies for advocacy on curriculum and program design. Limiting faculty councils to an advisory-only capacity directly reduces channels for graduate students to raise academic concerns or influence program decision-making. This restriction limits graduate students' participation in shaping the academic standards, research expectations, and professional competencies central to their education. Graduate students also rely on certificate and minor programs for their academic training and professional development, but SB 37 authorizes program eliminations based on periodic reviews, leaving these programs vulnerable to removal for reasons unrelated to scholarly merit or educational need. The Graduate Student Assembly documents these changes as significantly affecting graduate student education, representation, and academic opportunities at UT Austin, and as inconsistent with the University's stated mission to advance learning, discovery, and academic excellence.

**A.R. F25-02**

# In Opposition of the Implementation of Texas Senate Bill 37 at The University of Texas at Austin

**Authors:** REPRESENTATIVE MATEO VALLEJO (School of Social Work)

---

## SECTION 1: INDEPENDENCE FROM UNIVERSITY

- (a) This resolution does not constitute an official, unofficial, formal, or informal position of the University of Texas at Austin. Notwithstanding the presence or absence of any University branding marks, this resolution expresses the position of only:
- (1) the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA); and
  - (2) the bodies and constituents the GSA empowered to represent.
  - (3) The GSA does not purport to speak on the university's behalf, and this resolution may not be construed as an attempt to do so, notwithstanding the University's sponsorship of and providing of resources to this student organization.
  - (4) It is the GSA's intent that this section brings this resolution into compliance with the requirements under Regents' Rule 50203, specifically Section 2.2.

## SECTION 2: RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS,** Per section 1.01 of the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) bylaws, the GSA represents the voice of graduate and professional students at UT Austin and bears responsibility for advocating for academic integrity, campus shared governance, and student involvement in institutional decision-making<sup>1</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** The preservation of shared academic governance between faculty, students, and administrators is essential to sustaining a rigorous and credible educational environment; and,

**WHEREAS,** Per section 3.1 of Rule 10901 of the University of Texas System Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents<sup>2</sup>, "success of The University of Texas System is dependent on maintaining the trust and confidence earned from students... through diligence and honorable conduct"; and,

**WHEREAS,** Senate Bill 37<sup>3</sup> (SB 37), passed by the 88th Texas Legislature, was signed into law and took effect on September 1, 2025; and,

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://utexas.app.box.com/v/GSABylaws-ApprovedFall23>

<sup>2</sup> <https://utsystem.edu/sites/default/files/offices/board-of-regents/rules-regulations/10901.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/89R/billtext/pdf/SB00037I.pdf>

**WHEREAS,** The UT System Board of Regents ended faculty councils and senates at Texas public universities, including UT Austin, to serve in an advisory-only role, removing their ability to make binding decisions<sup>4</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** The reduction of faculty decision-making authority limits academic oversight of curricula, degree requirements, and research training—all areas that directly shape graduate education; and,

**WHEREAS,** SB 37 directs the UT System Board of Regents and other governing boards to review general education curricula periodically and to consolidate or eliminate minor and certificate programs, which are frequently pursued by graduate students to supplement their degrees<sup>5</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Graduate students depend on faculty governance bodies such as the UT Austin Faculty Council to advocate for policies affecting graduate education, including workload, degree requirements, grievance procedures, and teaching responsibilities; and,

**WHEREAS,** Political appointees, often without subject matter expertise, now have control over course content<sup>6</sup>, hindering graduate students' ability to engage in independent inquiry and develop advanced disciplinary knowledge;<sup>7</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** The UT System Board of Regents adopted a policy to implement SB 37, which has required the dissolution of existing faculty governance structures, including UT Austin's Faculty Council, by September 1, 2025, and the formation of new advisory groups without binding decision-making authority<sup>8</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** The dissolution of faculty governance bodies has reduced faculty's capacity to represent graduate student concerns in academic decision-making, thereby limiting graduate students' indirect representation in governance processes at UT Austin; and,

**WHEREAS,** Without meaningful faculty participation in governance, graduate programs lose essential advocates for maintaining high academic standards, equitable workloads, and effective mentorship structures; and,

**WHEREAS,** The program reviews mandated by SB 37 create the possibility that graduate-level certificate programs, dual-degree options, and specialized minors could be

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://thedailytexan.com/2025/08/21/ut-system-ends-faculty-senates-to-abide-by-texas-senate-bill-37/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://thedailytexan.com/2025/08/25/graduate-students-raise-concerns-about-senate-bill-37-end-of-faculty-councils/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.texastribune.org/2025/05/24/texas-governing-boards-regents-senate-bill-37/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://aaup-texas.org/blog/f/sb-37-20-state-takeover-of-public-higher-ed>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thedailytexan.com/2025/09/26/university-announces-new-structure-for-faculty-advisory-to-comply-with-state-law/>

discontinued, directly affecting graduate students' academic training and career preparation; and therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED,** The University of Texas at Austin Graduate Student Assembly opposes the Implementation of Texas Senate Bill 37 at The University of Texas at Austin, on the grounds that it undermines shared academic governance, educational quality, and graduate student representation and therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED,** That the Graduate Student Assembly formally states that the implementation of SB 37 at the University of Texas at Austin weakens accountability in curricular and programmatic decision-making; and therefore,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That the Graduate Student Assembly recognizes the impact of SB 37's program review requirements on graduate students who rely on certificate, minor, and interdisciplinary programs for their professional development and urges the University to safeguard academic opportunities that prepare graduate students for research, teaching, and professional practice; and therefore,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Daily Texan, the Austin American-Statesman, the Office of the Dean of Students, the Union Board of Directors, the Office of the President of the University of Texas at Austin, the Office of the Dean of Social Work