

**Preface:**

(1) All bylaw references will be coded Title (if applicable) ##, Article ##, Section ##, Clause ##, part (if applicable) ##, as “T##A##S##C##P##.” For example, Article 1, Section 1, Clause 1, will be coded as “A1S1C1” for reference;

(2) Any referenced website links may or may not be active by the time future individuals review this write-up.

**Complaint #21-03**

**Petitioner(s):** Maryam Alghafir (further referred to as “Maryam”, she/her),

Representing N/A

**Respondent(s):** Rise Up Party (further referred to as “Rise Up”),

Representing Rise Up

**Allegations (filed February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:29PM):**

(1) Rise Up violated A4S2C7 of the Election Code:

*“No campaigning may occur before the start of the official campaigning period as dictated by the Election Commission.”*

**Defense (filed February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 11:44PM):**

“Cheyenne Johnson resigned from her post as #ForTheStudents Comms. Director on January 28th, 2021.

After that, she has had NO communication with #ForTheStudents organization and has thus spent the last two weeks working with our media department to plan for our announcement. The reason Cheyenne was following #RiseUp was because she was working with our in-house media team to create the social media graphics you see today.

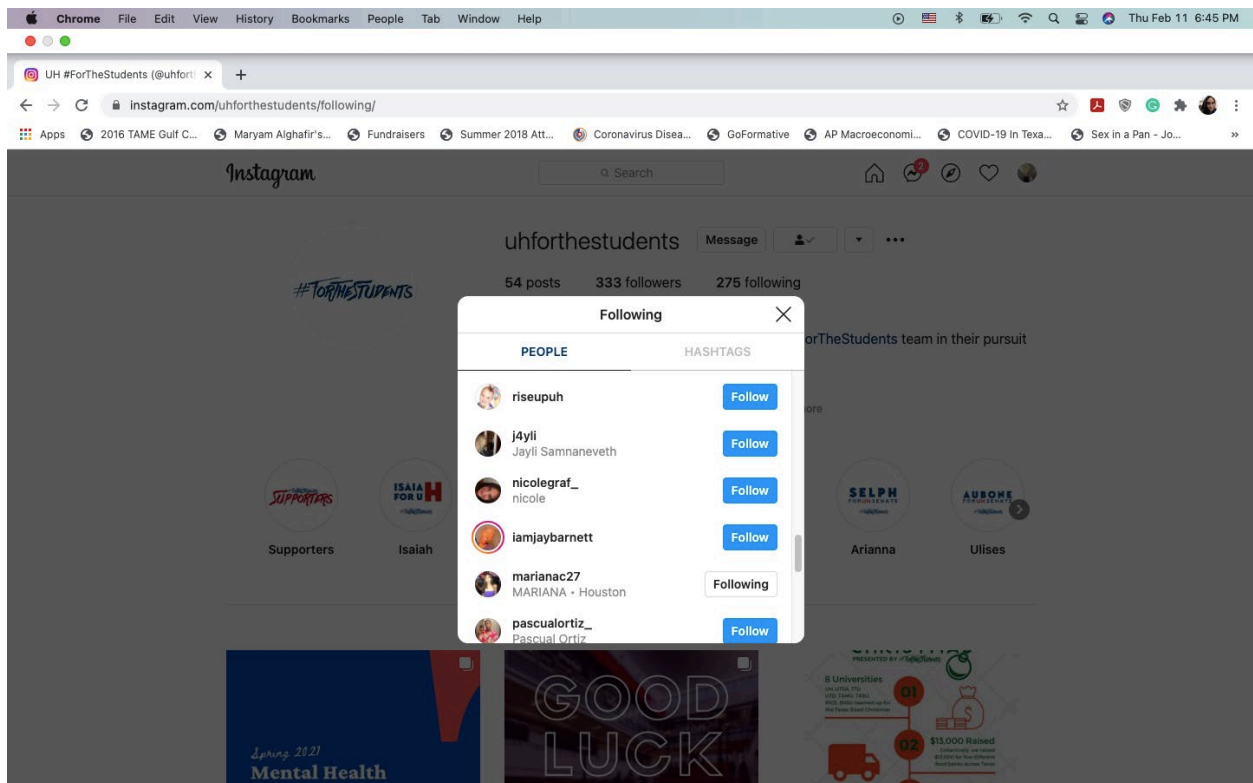
The fact that Cheyenne Johnson forgot to change her Instagram bio does not indicate that she has colluded with any outside organization that was to know of the start of #RiseUp.

If you want more clarification on this erroneous and shortsighted claim, I ask that you please speak to the current #ForTheStudents President Isaiah Martin, as he will clear up any confusion regarding Cheyenne Johnson’s previous role within that organization. His email is listed below:

[isaiah.martin@gmail.com](mailto:isaiah.martin@gmail.com)”

-Q Edminston, Presidential Party Candidate

**Course of Investigation:** I examined the Petitioner's evidence and reached out for a defense statement. I analyzed the respondent's defense statement as well. I then messaged the Petitioner due to a discrepancy in the complaint filing, and got an answer. I went through the Election Code and identified if a violation was present. After this I had enough to come to a decision.



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Chey  
21  
University of Houston; Communications Director of #ForTheStudents  
Frisco, TX//OKC, OK  
[forthestudentsuh.com](http://forthestudentsuh.com)  
Followed by arianna\_selph, isalahbillions, quentinedmiston +6 more

POSTS TAGGED

Three women posing in front of a stone fireplace.

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Message From #FTS Comms Director

Welcome back Cogs! Happy first day of the Spring 2021 semester! While we have been online for three semesters now, I want to challenge students to join at least one of the many clubs or organizations that University of Houston has to offer. Meet some new people, make some new friends and most importantly stay healthy!

For those on or close to campus, please take advantage of the Free COVID-19 Testing center outside Student Center South starting on January 20th, from 8AM-5PM.

Let's make this a happy and healthy semester! Go Cogs!

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For The Students

Message From #FTS Comms Director

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**Decision (February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:01PM):** Maryam's complaint HAS merit and this IS a violation of the Election Code.

**Sanction:** A Class C penalty will be imposed on the Rise Up party. The sanction will be a two hour ban on the first day of voting for the party between the hours of 8am-10am. I encourage the party to appeal to get a broader understanding of why the penalty was imposed if interested. This sanction follows appropriate measure as this is the second complaint regarding pre-campaigning filed against this party that has merit; the first response was a warning and so it is only understandable that the subsequent would be a sanction. The social media may remain up, but there should be no interaction or activity during the suspension period.

**Further Analysis:** The complaint as it was filed, included that the pre-campaigning allegation was in correspondence with the usage of the past "FTS" party's social media's promotion of the new party "Rise Up". Rise Up also included this endorsement on their social media very shortly after the campaigning period was announced; therefore, implying that there had been communication about this endorsement prior to the designated campaigning period. The "Rise Up" social media, while not having been made public, was still active and allowed participation of other UH students or potential voters before the candidate seminar, meaning that interactions could have been made to reach out to students. The social media platform had followers that were not party members, therefore implying that there had been public outreach that was prohibited. As there was intended collaboration with a past party to engage in campaigning efforts, this constitutes a clear violation of the aforementioned Election Code legislation. Cheyenne's activity did not have significant weight on my decision, as I believe that parties ought to be responsible for all campaigning efforts done publicly.

**Conclusion:** The above sanction will be imposed on the Rise Up party, and I urge the Rise Up party to appeal, if interested, in order to gain a further understanding of the violation.

**Delivered to the Chief Election Commissioner:** February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10:07PM