

UCC 023312S
Response to UCC 0218 12S

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON
UNIVERSITY COMMISSION ON WOMEN

Memo

To: University Coordinating Commission
University Policies & Procedures

From: University Commission on Women

CC: Peggy Levy, Jeannette Morales

The University Commission on Women (UCW) is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the proposal numbered UCC 0218 12S – SAM 01.D.05: Equal Employment Opportunity. The goal of the policy is laudable as it seeks to prevent employment discrimination of UH employees as well as UH job applicants.

However, the policy does not go far enough as it does not include the protected status of “gender identity and expression.” This status is often defined as “a gender-related identity, appearance, expression or behavior of a person, regardless of the person’s assigned sex at birth.” Although such a policy is often seen as specifically benefiting transgender individuals, the protections offered cover a wide range of individuals and behaviors, including non-sexually stereotyped behaviors of all genders.

There has been a concerted effort from groups across campus, including the Student Government Association, the Cougar Allies, and the LGBT Resource Center, to have this phrase added to the University’s nondiscrimination clause. While the Equal Employment Opportunity policy is currently being revised, this would seem to be an appropriate and convenient time to add this status in order to expand the protections for UH staff and faculty members, as well as UH employee applicants.

Overall, the revised policy looks like an improvement as the changes add to the clarity of the policy. Therefore, the UCW would recommend approving the policy revisions outlined within the Equal Employment Opportunity policy with the additional recommendation that “gender identity and expression” be added as a protected status, to be inserted after the status category of “sexual orientation.” Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the policy revision.