

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The University Interscholastic League believes:

- that participation in extracurricular activities motivates students to place a high priority on attending school and making better grades,
- that most students enjoy the pursuit of excellence and seek opportunities to test themselves against their own accomplishments and the accomplishments of others,
- that such opportunities are best provided through properly conducted and equitably administered competitive activities, and
- that the classroom is enriched by the flow of student energy into the more intensified arena of competition and back into the classroom.

Therefore, we reaffirm that students are the focus of our endeavor and deserve an opportunity to:

- refine physical and mental skills,
- nurture self-realization and build self-confidence,
- feel a sense of pride and dignity,
- experience teamwork and develop a sense of fair play,
- develop the ability to lead and the willingness to follow,
- foster self-discipline and perseverance,
- appreciate that rules, consistently applied, create order and discipline,
- learn to accept graciously the decisions of judges and officials,
- affirm self-worth in times of disappointment as well as adulation,
- cultivate lifetime skills,
- complement their classwork with practice and performance,
- have fun,
- experience the joy of achieving their potential in a wholesome environment, and
- discover that ultimately the true meaning of winning is doing one's best.

University Interscholastic League
PO Box 8028
Austin TX 78713-8028
(512) 471-5883
FAX (512) 471-5908
e-mail: uiladmin@uts.cc.utexas.edu
Web site: www.uil.utexas.edu

UPDATED
FALL 2010



UIL TAKE 13 MINUTES

A 13-minute why, what and how of the UIL

Take 13 minutes

Take 13 minutes of your time to help yourself to a better understanding of the University Interscholastic League program and the activities participated in by one out of every two students in Texas public schools.

WHY HAVE INTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES?

TEAMWORK. Participation teaches that it is a privilege and an honor to represent one's school. Students learn to win and to lose – to take as well as to give.

Self-motivation and intellectual curiosity are essential to the best academic participants. Physical training and good health habits are essential to the best athletes. Interscholastic competition is a fine way to encourage youngsters to enrich their education and expand their horizons.

Leadership and citizenship experiences through interschool activities help prepare students for a more useful and wholesome life.

And it's fun!

UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE HISTORY

The University Interscholastic League (UIL) was created by The University of Texas at Austin to provide leadership and guidance to public school debate and athletics teachers. In 1909, with the approval of the Board of Regents, Dr. S. E. Mezes, president of the University, organized and formed the Extension Bureau at the University. The next year, Dr. Mezes created the Debating League of Texas High Schools as part of the Extension Bureau. He also appointed Professor Charles Ramsdell to investigate the need for a high school athletic organization. After talking with public school officials, Professor Ramsdell suggested organizing an Interscholastic Athletic Association. The proposal was approved and the UIL's two parent organizations – the Debating League of Texas and the Interscholastic Athletic Association – became operational.

In 1913, the Debating League and the Athletic Association merged to form the University Interscholastic League, which was centered in the Bureau of Public School Services, then a part of The University of Texas Extension Division. Today, the League operates as part of the University of Texas, under the auspices of the Vice President for the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. Since 1910, the records and achievements of high school participants have justified the decision of the University to support this program of public school service.

The UIL has grown into the largest interschool organization of its kind in the world, and is the envy of similar groups nationwide. The UIL exists to provide educational extracurricular academic, athletic and music contests. So successful is the program that one of every two public high school seniors has participated in a UIL event prior to graduation. The initials "UIL" have come to represent quality educational competition, administered by school people on an amateur and equitable basis.

PURPOSE: EDUCATIONAL COMPETITION

The purpose of the UIL is to organize and properly supervise contests that assist in preparing students for citizenship. It aims to provide healthy, character building, educational activities carried out under rules providing for good sportsmanship and fair play for all participants.

Sensible organized competition under proper controls has demonstrated its value and has furnished inspiration to talented students for many years. The UIL does not provide a contest for every student, but does fill the need for those with the physical and intellectual capacity to excel in activities beyond the classroom. The UIL has the active support of most of the school executives, teachers, and citizens in Texas.

SCHOOLS MAKE THE RULES

The **Constitution and Contest Rules** contains rules for UIL activities and standards of eligibility to be met by students to earn the privilege of representing their schools in interschool contests. These rules apply to participating schools and students.

From the beginning, administrators from across Texas have served on UIL committees and helped write and establish rules and administrative guidelines. By voluntary adoption of rules, school people discipline their own interschool activities.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The Legislative Council, the rule-making body, is composed of 28 public school administrators. Twenty are elected by school superintendents, with a representative chosen from each of the five conferences in each of the four geographical regions of the state. The chair of the Council appoints eight members from larger schools, to ensure a more balanced representation of ethnicity, gender and school populations.

The Council acts on many proposed amendments. An affirmative vote by a majority of superintendents is required to change an eligibility rule or to make a major change in UIL policy. Rules approved by the Council or by vote of member schools require further approval of the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency before they are implemented.

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

District executive committees are composed of one school administrator from each school in a UIL district. These committees exemplify grass roots control at its best. They arrange contest schedules and certify district representatives for the next level of competition. They administer and enforce the rules and settle disputes within a district. They have original jurisdiction over all eligibility questions within the district.

STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The State Executive Committee, appointed by the Commissioner of the Texas Education Agency, is composed of seven school administrators, representing each of the four geographical regions and each of the five conferences, and a minimum of four at-large members.

This committee interprets the rules, settles disputes between different UIL districts and disputes which arise past the district level, conducts investigations and hearings of alleged violations, and hears appeals.

ADMINISTRATION

The UIL office is located at 1701 Manor Road in Austin. The UIL is administered by the director and a support staff of approximately 40 people.

Many contests are directed by University of Texas at Austin faculty who teach in the area of the contests they direct.

UIL staff members cannot penalize any school or student; they may give an opinion or staff interpretation. Only the appropriate committee can give a final interpretation or apply a penalty.

HOW IS THE UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE FUNDED?

The University of Texas at Austin provides land for the building, furniture and administrative support for the UIL.

The League's sources of income are: membership dues; participation fees; contest fees; open records productions; publication sales; the admission price for state level cross-country, swimming and diving, tennis, wrestling and one-act play contests; an annually determined percentage of admission prices for state level baseball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, and marching band contests; an annually determined percentage of football and basketball post district gate receipts; proceeds from radio and television broadcasting and telecasting contracts; as well as proceeds from sponsorships and advertising.

The UIL publishes and sells many bulletins. The money the UIL receives is used to publish the **Constitution and Contest Rules** and other UIL publications used in UIL activities; to purchase printed material to improve UIL contests; for teacher-student clinics; for investigations; for salaries; for the purchase of awards; and to conduct state contests.

IN OTHER STATES

Other states and many Canadian provinces have similar organizations. It is to the credit of the school people of Texas that theirs is recognized as one of the best. Many states have patterned their leagues after the UIL. Texas has often been called on to help its neighbors with their programs, and UIL employees have been named to national offices and committees in recognition of their expertise.

WHAT DOES THE UIL DO?

- Provides students with educational experiences through competition.
- Promotes good sportsmanship and cooperation among member schools.
- Works to prevent exploitation of students by special interest groups.
- Publishes the **Leaguer** newspaper, which is provided to coaches and administrators of all member schools, UIL adjudicators and officials, and interested news media in Texas.
- Provides the use of speech video tapes and athletic tournament and rules films through The UT-Austin Film Library and the National Federation of State High School Associations.
- Works closely with associations to provide better officiating and adjudication for UIL contests.
- Sponsors regional conferences and clinics for athletic, music, theatre and academic contests.
- Provides materials to schools for use in UIL contests.
- Seeks to safeguard the health and welfare of students by requiring physical examinations for participation in athletics.
- Seeks to keep awards for achievement on a sensible basis by restricting the cost and type.
- Sponsors district, regional and state tournaments or meets in athletic, music, theatre and academic contests.
- Provides theatre teachers with an extensive Drama Loan Library of more than 26,000 plays.
- Sponsors the Interscholastic League Press Conference.
- Administers the Texas Interscholastic League Foundation which provides scholarships for theatre and academic state competitors.

CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOLS

Texas school people believe that there is more equitable competition on a state-wide basis when schools compete with other schools of comparable size. UIL member schools are divided into five conferences according to enrollment. Conferences, in order of enrollment, are 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A and A.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Properly administered extracurricular activities are good for students and are educational. However, individuals, civic groups, professional organizations and schools must cooperate to keep competitive events educational. Students should learn to obey and respect rules. As a citizen interested in the welfare and education of Texas youth, you should discourage attempts to circumvent rules, or to exploit, commercialize or use high school students.

If you have questions, concerns or suggestions, talk to local school authorities or UIL staff members. They can explain standards governing competition, amateurism, awards, age limits, scholastic requirements, all-star games, physical examinations and other regulations.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS

The purpose of eligibility rules and contest regulations is to keep competition equitable and to maintain activities in proper perspective. It is the responsibility of each school to see that students do not compete unless they comply with all eligibility rules. It is also the responsibility of the student to observe and obey these standards.

Protect Your Eligibility is a pamphlet outlining basic regulations for students and parents.

According to UIL standards, students are eligible to represent their school in interscholastic activities if they:

- have not graduated from high school,
- are full-time, day students in the school, and have been in regular attendance at the school since the 6th class day of the present school year, or have been in regular attendance for 15 or more calendar days before the contest or competition,
- are in compliance with state law and rules of the State Board of Education,
- are enrolled in a four-year program of high school courses, and initially enrolled in the 9th grade not more than 4 years ago nor in the 10th grade not more than 3 years ago,
- were not recruited,

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS (cont.)

- are not in violation of the awards rule, and
- meet the specific eligibility requirements for academic, music and/or athletic competition.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ACADEMIC CONTESTS

- meet all the requirements above, and
- have not changed schools for the purpose of participating in a UIL academic contest.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MUSIC CONTESTS

- meet all the requirements above, and
- have not changed schools for the purpose of participating in a UIL music contest.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETIC CONTESTS

- meet all the requirements above,
- are less than 19 years old on September 1 preceding the contest or have been granted eligibility based on a disability that delayed their education by at least one year,
- live with their parents inside the school district attendance zone their first year of attendance (see your school administrator for exceptions),
- have not changed schools for athletic purposes,
- have not violated the athletic amateur rule, and
- were eligible according to the fifteen-day rule and the residence rule prior to district certification.

Schools may adopt stricter standards for eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities.

