

Student leaders ban lack of school spirit



HOUSTON (AP) — Student leaders at the University of Houston think too many of their classmates wear clothes bearing the symbols of other schools, including rivals Texas A&M University and the University of Texas.

So, with tongue in cheek, the leaders have suggested barring students from wearing symbols of other Southwest Conference schools.

Violators could face five hours of community service and might have to write a two-page report on the school's history. They might even be slapped with a citation — a discount coupon that would allow them to go out and buy something more appropriate to wear, in Cougar red.

"This was done in jest," Russell Hruska, president of the Students' Association, said Wednesday. "The whole point of the bill was to bring up the point that we should be proud of the university."

A&M is king in its small hometown of College Station, and the University of Texas is the center of Austin's universe.

But in sprawling Houston, most commonly associated with the oil industry and home to NASA's astronauts, the University of Houston frequently is forgotten.

The school's athletic programs are overshadowed by professional sports. And when one thinks of college brainpower, nearby Rice University usually comes to mind first.

"We're a very diverse city, so you don't have that sense of identity you have, say at College Station," Hruska said. "This has always been a school of older, less traditional students."

The proposal, submitted to the Students' Association by two student senators on Monday, would have to be passed by that body and approved by university officials. Nobody expects it to get beyond the first step.

Nevertheless, some students have criticized the proposal as a violation of their civil rights.

Hruska agrees — but says that students shouldn't take the proposal so seriously, they should just show a little more school spirit.

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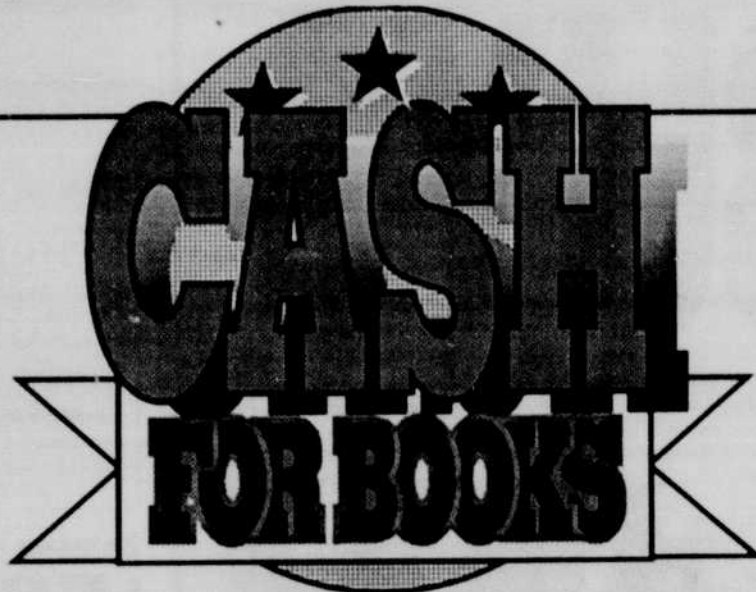
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