

BYLAWS OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT SENATE
(As amended Fall 2006)

Article I: **Purpose and Authority of Bylaws**

- A. These bylaws shall be the official rules of the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) Senate. They shall supersede any previous Senate bylaws. When additional and more specific rules are needed, the Senate shall create or adopt standing rules and rules of order, which must be in accordance with these bylaws and the USG Constitution.

Article II: **Senate Structures and Officers**

A. The Chair

1. The USG Executive Vice-President shall serve as the chair of the Senate. The chair shall preside over meetings of the Senate, when present, and except as noted below.
2. When the Chair is absent, the President Pro Tempore shall preside over the meeting. If the chair becomes ill, he/she may step down for the duration of the meeting and the President Pro Tempore shall preside. If the chair is present but cannot remain impartial on an issue or wishes to engage in debate, he/she may step down and the President Pro Tempore shall preside until the issue is resolved.
3. The duties of the Chair shall be:
 - a. To declare the opening of each Senate meeting.
 - b. To recognize all speakers.
 - c. To decide all points of order.
 - d. To recognize all proper motions, made in order of procedure.
 - e. To put questions to a vote, after the Senate has concluded debate, and to announce the results of all votes.
 - f. To appoint at least one sergeant-at-arms, subject to the approval of the Senate, whose duties are explained below.
 - g. To vote only in the case of a tie vote or a ballot vote. If the Chair is present but not presiding, he/she may vote only in a ballot vote.
 - h. To set the agenda for every Senate meeting in discussion with the President Pro Tempore.

B. The President Pro Tempore

1. Shall be elected by the Senate from its voting members.
2. Shall assume the duties of the Chair under the conditions described above.
3. Shall keep the right to vote while not presiding.
4. While presiding, shall vote in the manner described for the Chair.

C. The Recording Secretary

1. Shall be elected by the Senate from the membership of the Senate.
2. Shall take the minutes, that is, a written record of all proceedings during a Senate meeting.

D. The Sergeant-At-Arms

1. Shall be appointed by the Chair, not from the members of the Senate, and shall not vote.
2. Shall maintain order at Senate meetings.
3. At the order of the chair, the sergeant-at-arms shall clear the floor of unruly persons.
4. With the approval of the Senate, and when necessary, the Chair may appoint more than one sergeant-at-arms.

E. The Parliamentarian

1. Shall be appointed by the USG President, subject to the approval of the Senate.
2. Shall not be a member of the USG and shall not vote at Senate meetings.
3. Shall advise the Chair on all matters concerning the USG Constitution, USG bylaws, and the Senate's rules of order and standing rules. The Parliamentarian does not have the authority to make these decisions, only advise the Chair.

F. All Senators will be elected during the Spring election, before Commencement.

Article III: Meetings, Quorum and Attendance.

- A. The first meeting of the Senate shall take place by the third Wednesday of the Fall term.
- B. A filled seat shall be defined as a seat to which a Senator has been elected. An unfilled seat may occur due to resignation, impeachment or removal.
- C. Quorum shall be defined as the presence, in person or by proxy, of a majority of the filled voting seats of the Senate. Quorum is necessary for any vote to be taken.
- D. Senators are expected to attend Senate meeting regularly. Under the following conditions the recording secretary shall recommend to a Senator's constituency that the Senator be replaced:
 1. When the Senator misses four unexcused meetings in one academic year.
 2. When the Senator sends an alternate more than twice a semester. For these purposes, the Recording Secretary shall count leaving early as one third of an absence, and shall count leaving early as one third of an absence. Arriving late shall be defined as leaving the chamber without the intention of returning before the meeting is adjourned.
- E. The printed minutes shall contain the previous meeting's attendance record, and shall also contain a cumulative record of absences. The recording secretary shall maintain the meeting's attendance record at the end of each meeting for this purpose.

Article IV: Senate Powers and Procedures

- A. Senate legislation shall be defined as USG law, having full force and binding, unless vetoed by the President and not overturned by a Senate vote as stipulated in Article IV, Section C1, 4 and 5 of the USG Constitution.
- B. A force resolution is an expression of the will of Senate, and is not binding and is not law.

- C. The passage of force resolutions and legislation shall require a majority vote by the voting Senators present during a meeting.
- D. A budgetary matter shall be defined as an allocation to an individual organization, budgetary line, or the creation and presentation of referenda or other forms of indirect allocation of funds. The Senate shall have direct supervision over other monies allocations to the Senate in the budgetary process.
- E. The passage of the annual budget of the USG shall require a two-thirds vote of the filled seats of the Senate in a roll-call vote; all other budgetary matters shall require a majority vote of those present, using a roll-call vote.
- F. In the event the Senate does not pass the annual budget by April 15th, as specified in Article VII, Section 1E of the USG Constitution, the Executive Council shall proceed on behalf of the Senate as stipulated in Article VII, Section 1G.
- G. Legislation and resolutions proposed at Senate meetings must be submitted in writing to the recording secretary, to be read aloud to the Senate before a vote is taken.
- H. The Senate shall have the power to appoint all Senate committees other than the budget committee, unless the selection procedure is otherwise specified by Senate legislation.
- I. The Senate shall have a quorum call whenever called for by a Senator.

Article V: Voting

- A. There shall be no talking during a vote. No one may enter or leave the chamber during a vote.
- B. Voting, except in a ballot vote, shall consist of the voting aye, or nay, or abstaining. All those with voting rights must vote in one of these three ways. Abstentions are not counted towards the total when determining a majority of a two-thirds majority. No one who abstains may be compelled to vote differently.
- C. Ballot votes may be done differently, when appropriate. For example, Senators may choose one or more names from a list of several names when selecting committee members.
- D. Voting by voice may be used. In this case, the Chair shall decide the result. If the result is not clear, any Senator has the right to call for a vote by show of hands or by roll-call. A ballot vote shall be done if called for by a Senator and seconded by another.

Article VI: Secondary Rules and Procedures

- A. All persons present at a Senate meeting shall be subject to these bylaws.
- B. The recording secretary shall have minutes available to all Senators, in a manner to be determined by the Senate, at least 24 hours prior to a Senate meeting.
- C. The recording secretary shall also be responsible for obtaining the prepared agenda from the Chair and making the agenda available to every Senator, in a manner to be determined by the Senate, at least 24 hours prior to a meeting.
- D. Senate ad hoc committee may be established by a majority vote of the Senators present.

- E. All Senators must serve on at least one, but no more than four, Senate committees.
- F. The Senate shall confirm or reject all appointments by the USG President to University Governance-related committees. Once confirmed, the person may only be removed before his/her term expires by a two-thirds vote of the filled voting seats of the Senate. If the USG President exercises her/his emergency power to suspend temporarily the appointee from the position, then the Senate must review that decision at its next scheduled meeting. A majority vote of the filled seats in the Senate is needed to make the suspension a dismissal.

Article VII: Committee Rules

A. Types of Committees

- 1. There shall be two types of committees: standing committees and ad-hoc committees.
 - a. Standing committees are committees which are derived from constitutional authorization and cannot be dissolved.
 - b. Ad-hoc committees are committees established by the Senate for a fixed period of time, not exceeding the term of the Senate which establishes them.
 - 1. Ad-hoc committees shall operate in accordance with the rules of committees given herein, unless, by its charter, it shall be organized under separate rules, but no ad-hoc committee shall permit non-voting members of the Senate to be a member.
 - 2. Ad-hoc committees shall be established by resolution, which cannot be vetoed, which shall serve as the committee's charter.

B. Membership

- 1. Each committee, except the budget committee, shall be composed only of voting members of the Senate, chosen by the Executive Vice-President and the President Pro Tempore.
- 2. The budget committee shall be composed of voting members of the Senate, and of the Undergraduate Student Government Treasurer, and any assistant treasurers he or she may deem necessary, who shall be non-voting committee members.

C. Officers

- 1. Each committee, except the budget committee, shall elect from its own membership a chairperson, who shall preside over its meetings.
- 2. Each committee, except the budget committee, shall elect from its own membership a vice-chairperson, who shall preside over its meeting in the absence of the chairperson.
- 3. Each committee shall elect from its own membership a recording secretary, who shall take attendance, record all votes of the committee and all motions made, and shall, in coordination with the presiding officer, be responsible for ensuring that the correct version of any bill or resolution is received by the Senate.

4. Each committee shall have the power to remove its elected officers with a concurrence of two-thirds of the member present and voting. A separate vote shall be held to elect new officer to fill vacancies.

D. Meetings

1. Each committee shall meet no fewer than once a month during the fall and spring semesters. If business is brought to the attention of the committee they must meet within two weeks, even if it means the committee will meet more frequently than once a month.
2. Each chairperson shall, in consultation with their respective committee's members, set a time and place for the committee's regular meeting, provided that such meeting place is on campus and accessible to all members.
3. Each chairperson, or a majority of any committee's members, shall have the power to call a special meeting at a time and place of their choosing, provided that its members receive notice and that such meeting place is on campus and accessible to all members.
4. In the absence of both the chairperson and vice-chairperson, a committee shall not be permitted to meet.
5. Each committee meeting shall be open, but may be closed to non-committee members during deliberations by a vote of the committee's members.
6. A quorum for each committee to do business shall be defined as a majority of its members, counting the chairperson.

E. Procedures and Rules

1. The presiding officer shall conduct meeting in a manner that he or she deems best suited for the committee to carry out its functions while still maintaining order.
2. The presiding officer shall have the power:
 - a. To recognize members to speak;
 - b. To take part in the debate, but shall defer to other members before speaking unless he or she shall have a pressing matter to share with the committee;
 - c. To entertain motions, but not to make them; and
 - d. To vote, but only if their vote shall change the outcome of a decision, with the exception of the Treasurer, who shall only vote to break a tie.
3. Committee attendance shall be mandatory for all members, but each member shall be permitted two absences per committee.
4. Should a committee member be found to not be fulfilling their duties or to regularly exhibit poor behavior at committee meetings, the members of the committee, if a two-thirds vote is reached, may suggest to the President Pro Tempore and Executive Vice President the removal of the member in question. The President Pro Tempore and the Executive Vice President shall then make a decision based upon the arguments of both sides as to whether or not the member in question stays on the committee, being able to remove said member if it is agreed upon by both.

Article VIII: Standing Rules and Rules of Order

- A. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the main authority of Parliamentary Procedures.
- B. Standing rules shall be enacted by a majority vote of the Senate, and may be amended or suspended by a majority vote. These rules shall include, but are not limited to, the time and place of Senate meetings, and the manner in which agendas, minutes and other communications shall be distributed.
- C. All Senate bylaws must comply with the USG Constitution, which takes precedence.
- D. Rules of order shall be the procedures used in Senate meetings, which are not already specified in this document. They shall be enacted by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. Because rules of order affect the rights of members, a two-thirds vote is required to suspend or amend them. Rules of order must be in compliance with these bylaws. If this is not the case, the bylaws shall take precedence over rules of order.

Article IX: Powers reserved to the Chair

- A. The Chair has the final say on any procedural issues in the chamber, and the right to make decisions on matters of procedure. The only power denied to the Chair is to reject a Motion to Appeal the Decision of the Chair, after it has been seconded.

Article X: Amendments

- A. These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the filled seats of the Senate provided that notice and the proposed change(s) are submitted to the Senate at least one-week in advance of the vote.

Article XI: Ratification

- A. Ratification of these By-laws requires a majority vote of the filled seats of the Senate.