

The University of Texas at Tyler

Student Government Association Constitution:

Bylaws (Revised Spring 2015)

ARTICLE I

STANDING COMMITTEES

I. Identification

- A) The standing committees of the Student Government Association (SGA) shall be the Executive Board (Executive Council, EB, EC), the Student Life Committee, the Communications Committee, the Student Government Appropriations Committee (SGAC), the Rules Committee, and those additional committees approved following the guidelines in Article I, Section II of these Bylaws.

II. Creation and Dissolution

- A) The creation of new standing committees must be approved by the Executive Board and then passed with a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the General Assembly. Chairpersons of newly formed standing committees must be designated within the motion which creates the committee.
 - 1) By a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the General Assembly, the decision of the Executive board to deny the creation of a new standing committee may be overturned.
- B) The dissolution of a standing committee must be approved by the Executive Board and then passed with a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the General Assembly.
 - 1) By a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the General Assembly, the decision of the Executive Board to deny the dissolution of a standing committee may be overturned.

III. Composition and Dress Attire

- A) Each officer and senator shall serve on at least one (1) standing SGA Committee. Each of the standing committees shall be composed of at least three (3) senators and may include additional members who do not hold elected offices in the SGA. Committees may include graduate and undergraduate non-elected students.
- B) All SGA members will wear their designated business casual attire to all official meetings of the student senate and/or sanctioned or sponsored events of SGA.
 - 1) An SGA sponsored t-shirts will be worn for events deemed casual by the executive officers.
 - 2) Dress code excludes meetings of SGA Standing Committees, caucus meetings, Advisory Council meetings, retreats, and office hours.
 - 3) Dress code is as follows:

- A. Men; Polo/Button Down/Collared Shirt. Slacks with a belt. Shirt must be tucked in. Dress shoes or boots. Blue jeans or shorts will be disallowed at general assembly and/or sanctioned or sponsored events of SGA.
- B. Women; Dress tops, skirts, dress pants, long dresses with flats or heels. Sweatpants, leggings, long shirts or shorts will be disallowed at general assembly and/or sanctioned or sponsored events of SGA.
- C. For every three (3) incidences the dress code is not followed, the member shall be charged one (1) absence for their official attendance record.

IV. Chairperson

- A) The chairperson of each standing committee, unless otherwise designated in these Bylaws, the SGA Constitution, or the original motion which establishes the committee, shall be an Executive Board member as identified below:
 - 1) Executive Board Chair shall be the President,
 - 2) Student Life Committee Chair shall be the Vice President,
 - 3) Communications Committee Chair shall be the Secretary,
 - 4) SGAC Chair shall be the Treasurer,
 - 5) Rules Committee Chair shall be the Parliamentarian.
- B) The chairperson of each standing committee has the right to appoint any additional members who do not hold an elected office in the SGA to their respective committee.

V. Committee Responsibilities

- A) The Executive Board shall create and administer the agenda for the General Assembly meetings and meet with the advisor(s) to conduct business for the betterment of the SGA as a whole. The Executive Board shall designate as well as post in writing the representatives for The University of Texas System Student Advisory Council (UTSSAC) by the date set by The University of Texas System. Further, it shall also set in writing the attendance policy for the General Assembly in accordance with the SGA Constitution. Notice of additions to the agenda must be made twenty-four (24) hours in advance to the President.
- B) The Student Life Committee shall be responsible for coordinating all SGA activities.
- C) The Communications Committee shall be responsible for all communications between the elected members of the SGA and the student body. It shall also serve as the means of communication between the SGA and members of the faculty, staff, and campus media. It shall maintain and update any SGA website(s). It shall design and post flyers that advertise SGA events. It shall take and maintain pictures at all SGA events.
- D) The SGAC shall make recommendations concerning the preparation of the SGA budget and the allocation of SGAC funds according to the SGAC Policy.

- E) The Rules Committee shall establish election procedures and administer the elections under the SGA Constitution. It shall also be responsible for the review and revision of the SGA Constitution and Bylaws.
- F) In the event that a committee completes its immediately assigned tasks, the SGA Executive Board may assign that committee additional duties by a three-fifths ($3/5$) vote.
 - 1) G) By a three-fourths ($3/4$) vote of the General Assembly, the decision of the Executive Board to assign additional duties to a committee may be overturned.

ARTICLE II

ELECTION CODE OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

I. Positions to be Filled

- A) The Executive Board shall be composed of the following: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian.
- B) Senators shall be elected based on their membership in one of the following student categories: three (3) from each college of The University of Texas at Tyler, two (2) from each official student housing complex, five (5) from the freshman class of the student body, two (2) from the graduate class, two (2) from each official University of Texas at Tyler satellite campus, and ten (10) from the student body at large.

II. Creation and Dissolution of Officer Positions not Specified in the Constitution

- A) In accordance with Article III Section 3.2 Subsection K of the SGA Constitution, the Assembly is empowered to elect officers not specified within the SGA Constitution. Officers not specified in the Constitution may not serve as a part of the Executive Board unless the Constitution is amended to add them to the Executive Board in accordance with Article V Sections 5.1 and 5.2. Officer positions not specified in the SGA Constitution are to be created and dissolved as follows:
 - 1) The creation of new officer positions not specified in the Constitution must be approved by the Executive Board and then passed with a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the General Assembly. Any motion to create a new officer position not specified in the Constitution must establish the powers and responsibilities of the position within the motion itself.
 - 2) The dissolution of an officer position not specified in the Constitution must be approved by the Executive Board and then passed with a two-thirds (2/3) vote by the General Assembly. Positions which are created with a specified lifetime are dissolved automatically according to the motion which created them.

III. Requirements for Candidates

- A) To be eligible for election to an elected office, a candidate must meet the criteria listed in Article I of the SGA Constitution.
- B) In order to file for candidacy to represent any college, official student housing complex, official University of Texas at Tyler satellite campus, the freshman class, or the graduate class, a student must be a member of that constituency.

- C) Candidates may run for one (1) position on the Executive Board and any senator position for which they are qualified in accordance with Article II, Section III part B of these Bylaws. Candidates elected to more than one (1) position must select a single position in which to serve within 24 hours of notification of the election results. Any position not selected by the candidate within the time period shall be filled by the candidate receiving the second highest number of votes for that position.
- D) Any candidate currently serving on the Rules Committee may not participate in the creation or alteration of legislation involving elections during the time period of elections.
- E) All candidates must attend a candidacy meeting sponsored by the Rules Committee in order to campaign officially.

IV. Filing for Candidacy

- A) There will be a two (2) week period when classes are in session in which applications for candidacy shall be accepted.
- B) Application forms must at a minimum be available from the SGA offices, The Department of Student Life & Leadership, and all official UT Tyler satellite campuses. Applications may be available at additional locations at the discretion of the Rules Committee.
- C) No candidate may be involved in collecting candidacy forms.
- D) Completed application forms are to be returned no later than 5:00 PM to the SGA office(s) or the SGA Advisor(s) office(s) on the filing deadline.
- E) The SGA Advisor(s) shall determine the eligibility of prospective candidates to run for office in accordance with Article I of the SGA Constitution.
- F) Information related to elections such as candidate requirements and campaign rules shall be submitted in writing to each candidate at the mandatory candidacy meeting scheduled by the Rules Committee. The candidacy meeting shall be held two (2) weeks prior to the first day of elections. Campaigning may begin at the end of the candidacy meeting and may continue until polls are closed on the last evening of elections. It is the responsibility of candidates with major scheduling conflicts which would prevent attendance of the candidacy meeting to schedule a meeting with the Parliamentarian. These meetings must occur within one (1) calendar week of the candidacy meeting. Candidates who schedule an alternate meeting after the official date may not campaign until their meeting is complete. A deadline for arranging these meetings may be set at the discretion of the Parliamentarian.
- G) Persons wishing to campaign in an official manner as write-in candidates must also attend a Candidacy Meeting.

- H) Each candidate may select one (1) representative to assist the advisors and the Rules Committee in overseeing the election process during the two (2) days of the election as defined in Article II, Section X part B of these Bylaws. The candidate representative must be named on the candidate form at the time of submission and may not be a current elected SGA member or be running for a position.

V. Notice of Elections to Students

- A) Notice of a scheduled election shall be given to enrolled students no less than four (4) weeks prior to the election.
- B) Announcement of the election may be made in student publications, flyers posted on general University bulletin boards and housing divisions, and the SGA website. In addition, any other method deemed appropriate by the Rules Committee may be used.

VI. Rules of Campaigning

- A) Candidates must follow all published University and The University of Texas System rules and regulations, Manual of Policies and Procedures, and Regents' Rules regarding solicitation and University uses.
- B) Campaigning and soliciting may not occur within a radius from the election polls to be determined by the Rules Committee on the dates of elections. The Parliamentarian and/or the Rules Committee shall ensure that all candidates abide by the rules and regulations.
- C) No campaign material or activity may impede either pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- D) All candidates and their representatives are responsible for their individual actions taken during the course of a campaign.
- E) In addition to platform statements, candidates are allowed to advertise their candidacy in any student publication so long as they adhere to the rules set forth by that publication.
- F) Wearing campaign material on the person or personal belongings is acceptable. However, campaign materials may not be worn on the person or personal belongings within a polling area.
- G) Distribution of handbills is acceptable only if done on a person-to-person basis. Handbills may not be placed on vehicles or in mailboxes. Handbills may be made of typing paper and must be 8.5" x 11" or smaller. Posters are described as anything else (shape, size, length, material, etc.). They may be made of poster board or wood and must conform to the guidelines of The Manual of Policies and Procedures. All campaign material must conform to Article II, Section V part B of these Bylaws.
- H) No loudspeakers, noisemakers, or anything that might disturb any class shall be permitted at any time.

- I) Candidates may post posters within buildings only on official posting sites as determined by the Department of Student Life & Leadership. Each candidate may display no more than one (1) poster per official posting site.
- J) The Department of Student Life & Leadership must approve, stamp, and be given a copy of all campaign materials.
- K) No campaign material shall be placed on trees.
- L) Writing on sidewalks or on any non-approved surface shall not be permitted.
- M) Persons voting shall not be allowed to display any type of material containing a candidate's name within the polling area.
- N) Students and voting workers in the voting area shall not verbally persuade or coach voters but may advise on voting procedure.
- O) All campaign materials should be removed from designated posting locations within one (1) calendar week of the close of elections.

VII. Voting Stations and Ballots

- A) No candidate or representative shall work the voting stations during the election.
- B) No candidate shall participate in or be present for the counting of the ballots.
- C) The ballots will list each position with the candidates' names printed in ascending alphabetical order.
- D) At the close of the polls on the last day of voting, the ballots shall be counted. Each candidate representative may be present to observe the counting process.
- E) Official election results shall be posted in SGA designated areas by 12:00 PM (noon) on the day following the final voting day unless a complaint is filed.

VIII. Voting Dates and Locations

- A) The Department of Student Life & Leadership, Rules Committee, SGA Advisor(s), and Parliamentarian shall announce voting dates bi-annually. Any changes to the dates must be presented thirty (30) days prior to the election.
- B) The voting locations shall be at the discretion of the Department of Student Life & Leadership, Rules Committee, SGA Advisor(s), and Executive Board.
- C) The Rules Committee may select eligible members of the student body, staff and/or faculty to help in the election process as needed, in accordance with Article II, Section VII parts A and B of these Bylaws.

- D) Elected SGA members shall be sworn in in accordance with Article II Section 2.1 part 2.13 of the SGA Constitution.

IX. Votes and Voters

- A) All members of the Student Body shall be allowed one (1) vote for each officer position.
- B) Students may vote for any senatorial seat in which they are a member of the represented constituency.
- C) Students shall be allowed a number of votes equal to the number of seats currently open.

X. Financial Disclosures

- A) Candidates are required to keep accurate records of all campaign expenditures and donations received. Receipts must be maintained for all money expended and for all professional services rendered. This does not include labor from a volunteer staff. Donated items shall be reported at market value.
- B) The financial record must show the amount and purpose of all expenditures as well as the purpose of all donated items and funds and the name of the person, group or organization that donated said items or funds.
- C) The financial records are to be submitted in writing to the SGA Advisor(s) by 5:00 PM on the last day of elections.
- D) The Rules Committee reserves the right to release financial information regarding candidate expenditures and/or donations to the public.
- E) The value of mechanically reproduced copies shall be assessed at the candidacy meeting. This value shall be applied when no receipt is available.
- F) Candidates must supply their own campaign materials and are not permitted to use University-funded supplies, except printing from any lab for which the candidate has paid an access fee.
- G) All candidates are limited to \$500.00 total in campaign expenditures regardless of the number of seats for which they are running.
- H) No candidate or authorized agent shall knowingly falsify any entry on any receipt or in his or her financial records associated with the campaign.
- I) All candidates sharing benefits of joint receipts or expenditures shall declare them in their receipts and financial disclosures.
- J) No candidate shall claim any financial endorsement from any group or organization without first submitting to the Rules Committee a written statement from such group or

organization. This endorsement must then be reflected in all financial records for the candidate.

XI. Election Disputes

- A) If the candidate receiving the highest number of votes forfeits a position prior to being sworn in, then the candidate with the second highest number shall fill the position.
- B) The role of the Candidate Representative is to observe the campaigning, voting, and the counting of votes. If any irregularities occur, this person is to notify their candidate so the candidate may alert the SGA Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian shall then be responsible for convening the Judicial Board to hear the issue. Representatives are not allowed to resolve or become involved in the issue directly; however, they may provide information to the Judicial Board if a complaint is filed.

XII. C) Any complaint related to either a candidate, a candidate's campaign, or the election process, must be submitted in writing to the Judicial Board within twenty-four (24) hours of the alleged violation but no later than 11:00 AM on the day following elections. The Judicial Board shall review the complaint, make a decision, and take appropriate corrective measures. This could include the removal of campaign material, removal of a candidate from the election or from being sworn in, or referring the student through the Judicial Board's prescribed disciplinary process. The Judicial Board's decisions are final.

XIII. Ballot Counting

- A) The SGA President, Parliamentarian, and advisor(s) must be present when the ballots are being counted. The candidate representative may also be present. SGA Senators and Officers, with the exception of current candidates, are permitted to help in the ballot counting.
- B) Three (3) different SGA or Judicial Board members shall separately count each ballot once, resulting in three complete ballot counts. If the ballot counts do not match, the SGA or Judicial Board members shall recount the ballots until their counts match.
- C) If the number of votes cast and the number of voters are inconsistent, the Rules Committee shall decide if a runoff election should be held based on whether or not the outcome of the elections would change.

XIV. Special Elections

- A) If an open senator position is contested, the candidates shall have the opportunity to campaign to the General Assembly. After the candidates have spoken, they shall leave the room and the General Assembly shall vote on who shall fill the open position.
- B) In accordance with the Article IV, Section C of these Bylaws, any vacated officer position that is not filled through succession shall be filled through a special internal election. This process shall begin directly following the first regularly scheduled General Assembly meeting following the office becoming vacant.

- 1) The open position shall be run in accordance with all SGA policies except for Sections IV, V and X of the SGA Election Code.
 - 2) Notice of a scheduled special internal election shall be given to enrolled students at least one (1) calendar week prior to the election.
 - 3) Nominations for the ballot shall be taken from current SGA Senators and officers at a regularly scheduled General Assembly meeting.
 - 4) During this one (1) calendar week interlude, the SGA Advisor(s) shall verify the eligibility of all candidates nominated to the special election ballot.
 - 5) Candidates shall be given time to speak during the next regularly scheduled General Assembly meeting following nominations. After the candidates have spoken, they shall leave the room and the General Assembly shall discuss and vote upon the matter.
 - 6) During the meeting in which the candidates speak, the General Assembly shall vote by secret ballot.
 - 7) The candidate that receives the greatest number of votes shall fill the open office.
 - 8) In the case of a tied vote, another secret ballot shall be run including only the tied individuals.
- C) Should the regularly scheduled elections result in a tie for an open seat, the following shall be the process for a runoff election. This process shall take place during the first regularly scheduled General Assembly meeting following the close of elections.
- 1) Notice of a scheduled runoff election shall be given to enrolled students at least one (1) calendar week prior to the election.
 - 2) The runoff election must be held two (2) weeks after the counting of the ballots.
 - a) Campaigning for the contested position(s) may begin immediately following the official announcement of election results.
 - 3) The tied position(s) shall be run in accordance with all SGA policies except for Sections IV, V and X of the SGA Election Code.
 - 4) A runoff election shall not be held if the tied parties have received less than three (3) votes.
- D) 5) Should a runoff election not be held (in accordance with Article II, Section XIII, Subsection C, sub-subsection 4 of these Bylaws), any candidate(s) may request to speak with the General Assembly in accordance with Article II, Section XIII, Subsection A of these Bylaws. This is a direct modification on Article II, Section XIII, Subsection A of

these Bylaws. All SGA special elections including Executive Board, Senate, and referendum elections shall be held under the rules determined in these Bylaws.

XV. Substitutions

- A) If the SGA President or Parliamentarian is running for an office, another officer must substitute for their duties as appropriate.
 - 1) By a three-fourths (3/4) vote, the General Assembly may enable two (2) currently elected officers to perform the duties of the Parliamentarian or President in collaboration. The officers must perform all duties jointly.

ARTICLE III

STUDENT GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

I. SGAC Policy Required Revisions Schedule

- A) The SGAC Policy must be reviewed by the Student Government Appropriations Committee during the fall of every even numbered school year.

II. The SGAC Policy shall be amended as follows:

- A) Any elected member of the General Assembly may present a motion to have the SGAC review the SGAC Policy before a quorum of the General Assembly.
- B) The proposed motion shall be open for discussion, at which point voting and non-voting members shall have the opportunity to voice their opinion(s).
- C) The motion shall come to a vote upon the closure of discussion, and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all elected members.
- D) Following the passing of the motion to review the SGAC Policy, the SGAC shall be allowed to present their findings.
- E) Should the SGAC find that an immediate amendment must be made, a member of the General Assembly may make a motion to amend the SGAC Policy before a quorum of the General Assembly.
- F) The proposed amendment shall be open for discussion, at which point voting and non-voting members shall have the opportunity to voice their opinion(s).
- G) The motion shall come to a vote upon the closure of discussion, and shall require a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all elected members.
- H) The ratified Policy shall come into effect at the beginning of the next Fall or Spring semester, as stated in the initial motion.
 - 1) By a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the present elected members, any amendment to the SGAC Policy may be brought into effect immediately if no SGAC funds have been distributed during the current semester.
 - 2) By a unanimous vote of the present elected members, any amendment to the SGAC Policy may be brought into effect immediately.

ARTICLE IV

Presidential Review and Senator Reform

- I.** A member may be called to Presidential review by:
 - A) The written request of one-third (1/3) of the filled Senate seats, or
 - B) The written request of the member's committee chair, or
 - C) The written request of 15 of their constituents.

- II.** During the Presidential review, the President of SGA shall meet with the officer or senator in question. The officer or senator may request the presence of the SGA Advisor(s).
 - A) This meeting must be scheduled within two (2) calendar weeks of receiving the aforementioned written request(s).
 - B) The meeting may occur at any point but must be scheduled within the time limit as per Article IV, Section II, Subsection A of these Bylaws.

- III.** Following the Presidential review meeting, the President may assign ANY of the following Reforms:
 - A) The officer or senator shall be required to host a Student Voice report table for up to three (3) hours in an area that is easily accessible to members of their constituency.
 - B) The officer or senator shall be required to speak to a number of currently registered student organizations and/or classes as determined by the SGA President.
 - C) The President may elect to not implement a reform.
 - D) If an officer or senator has been reviewed more than three (3) times in a semester in which the President implemented a reform other than Article IV, Section III subsection D, the President shall be given the authority to remove the officer or senator in question from office.

- IV.** Following the review, the President must report the outcome of the meeting including the reform implemented to the General Assembly at the next regularly scheduled General Assembly meeting.

- V.** An officer or senator shall automatically be placed under review if:
 - A) They do not present a Student Voice Report to the General Assembly in four (4) calendar weeks.
 - B) They miss two (2) consecutive General Assembly meetings.

C) They miss two (2) consecutive required 'Non-General Assembly meeting' events or miss four (4) total 'Non-General Assembly meeting' events.

D) They miss a special session.

VI. Appeals

A) The decision of the President may be appealed through the following process:

1) Within two (2) Executive Board meetings of the Presidential decision being rendered, the officer or senator in question must inform the Executive Board of their intent to appeal the instituted reform.

2) Within two (2) General Assembly meetings of the Presidential decision being rendered, the officer or senator in question may appeal to the General Assembly during Speaker's Podium.

A) By a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the General Assembly may repeal any reform set forth by the President.

B) By a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the General Assembly may substitute any reform set forth by the President with another from Article IV Section III of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE V

SUCCESSION OF OFFICERS

VII. Succession Procedure

- A) The order of succession within the Executive Board shall be as follows:
 - 1) President
 - 2) Vice President
 - 3) Secretary
 - 4) Treasurer
 - 5) Parliamentarian
- B) According to the order of succession each individual within the Executive Board beneath the vacant office shall have the option to fill the vacancy.
- C) If an officer position is vacated and not filled through succession, a special election within the General Assembly shall be held to fill the vacancy. The Special Election shall be held in accordance with Article II, Section XII, Subsection C of these Bylaws.