



Southwestern Oklahoma State University
SWOSU Digital Commons

Student Government Association Documents

University Documents

7-7-2020

Student Government Association Bylaws

Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/sgadocs>

Recommended Citation

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, "Student Government Association Bylaws" (2020). *Student Government Association Documents*. 1.
<https://dc.swosu.edu/sgadocs/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Documents at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Government Association Documents by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. An ADA compliant document is available upon request. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.

Student Government Association Bylaws

Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Section One: Authority of the Bylaws

The Bylaws of the Student Government Association (“SGA”) shall provide such regulatory and procedural instructions as are necessary to ensure the effective operation of SGA. These Bylaws shall be superseded only by the Constitution of SGA, unless amended in accordance with Section Six of this document.

Section Two: Bylaws Pertaining to the Legislative Branch

Subsection One: Officers of the Senate

The SGA Senate shall, at their second stated meeting, elect officers as stated in Article II, Section 4 of the SGA Constitution. These officers shall include the following:

- i) a President Pro Tempore, who shall serve as the chief legislative officer of SGA, shall chair the Senate in the absence of the Chair (Vice President), shall appoint students to vacancies in the Senate in accordance with Article II, Section Six of the SGA Constitution, shall appoint Senators to SGA committees and remove them if necessary, shall chair the Legislation Committee, and shall declare vacancies in the Senate in accordance with Article II, Section Six of the SGA Constitution and Section Two, Subsection Six of this document;
- ii) a Deputy President Pro Tempore, who shall serve in the absence of the President Pro Tempore and assist with the performance of his or her duties;
- iii) a Secretary, who shall keep an accurate record of all Senate proceedings, report absences from Senate sessions to the President Pro Tempore, and maintain a record of all legislation heard by the Senate, including final action, to be archived in the Student Government Center;
- iv) a Sergeant-at-Arms, who shall assist the Chair in maintaining order during Senate sessions, shall be responsible for the upkeep of the Senate chambers, and shall assist the Chair in the tallying of votes if needed; and
- v) a Parliamentarian, who shall provide parliamentary rulings in accordance with the most recent revision of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, when not conflicting with any governing document, at the request of the Chair or any duly recognized Senator, shall ensure that copies of all governing documents listed in Article I, Section One of the SGA Constitution are present at all Senate sessions, and shall assist the Chair in the keeping of time if needed.

All candidates wishing to be considered for such office shall file an application with the Chair (Vice President). Candidates shall be permitted to speak to the Senate regarding their candidacy; limitations on time shall be at the discretion of the Chair, but all candidates must receive equal time. At the conclusion of such speeches, the candidates shall be escorted from chambers, at which time voting shall immediately take place. Candidates shall be elected to office by a plurality of those Senators present and voting on the day of the election.

All Senate officers shall be subject to removal from their office by a 2/3 majority vote of no confidence. Any officer removed by such vote shall retain their Senate seat.

Subsection Two: Impeachment of Senators

Senators shall be subject to impeachment in accordance with Article II, Section Seven of the SGA Constitution. Impeachment charges shall be brought by 3/4 passage of a resolution containing articles of impeachment; such resolution need not be heard in committee prior to its introduction. Upon passage, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall preside over the Senate during trial.

The Senate nominate and, by a 2/3 vote, confirm an Attorney General from its membership to argue for prosecuting the impeached Senator. The impeached Senator may represent him or herself or select a fellow Senator to argue on his or her behalf, at his or her discretion. The Chief Justice shall hear arguments from each side; limitations on time shall be at the discretion of the Chief Justice, but both sides must receive equal time.

At the conclusion of arguments, the Supreme Court shall deliberate and rule on the charges in accordance with the university's Student Code of Conduct and the governing documents of SGA. Should the Supreme Court rule in the prosecution's favor, the Senator shall be immediately removed from office.

All matters regarding impeachment, including written majority and minority opinions from the Supreme Court, shall be made available at the Student Government Center and also be disseminated to all SGA faculty advisors within one calendar week of the date of impeachment and conviction.

Subsection Three: Establishment of Committees

All Senators shall, as part of the duties of office, serve on one standing committee. These committees shall be:

- i) the Legislation Committee, which shall be chaired by the President Pro Tempore and shall review and make recommendations on legislation prior to its presentation to the Senate;
- ii) the Special Projects Committee, which shall be chaired by the Special Projects Secretary and shall be responsible for the planning of all campus-wide events sponsored by SGA;
- iii) the Internal Affairs Committee, which shall be chaired by the Internal Affairs Secretary and shall be responsible for the planning of all internal events sponsored by SGA; and
- iv) the Campus Improvement Committee; which shall be chaired by the Executive Secretary and shall make recommendations to the university administration regarding improvements to the campus and, where appropriate, coordinate student efforts to facilitate such improvements.

Committee membership shall be assigned by the President Pro Tempore; however, reasonable efforts shall be made to accommodate Senators facing scheduling conflicts, and no committee shall have a membership in excess of fifteen Senators at any time.

Each committee shall elect from its membership a Vice Chair, who shall chair in the absence of the Chair of the committee, and a Secretary, who shall keep a record of attendance and take minutes at all committee meetings.

Additional ad hoc committees may be formed by a simple majority vote of the Senate or when called by SGA governing documents (i.e. the Election Committee). Such committees shall exist for the purpose and duration specified at their creation and shall not count towards the committee membership requirement in this subsection.

No less than once per semester, the Senate shall form an Audit Committee for the purpose of verifying the financial state of SGA. Such committee shall be charged with working with the Student Body Treasurer to review all incomes and expenditures of SGA for the academic year. Membership of the committee shall be assigned by the President Pro Tempore, and the committee shall elect from within its membership a Senator to serve as chair. The Student Body Treasurer shall be an ex officio member of the committee. This committee shall be considered an ad hoc committee and shall disband following a report from the committee chair to the Senate regarding the financial state of the organization.

Subsection Four: Procedures for Legislation

All legislation presented to, and passed by, the Senate shall take the form of either a resolution or a bill.

All legislation, excepting resolutions containing articles of impeachment or legislation presented as emergency, shall be heard and given a recommendation by the Legislation Committee prior to being heard by the Senate. The recommendations for legislation shall be as follows:

- i) Do pass: this legislation, either as presented to committee or as amended therein, is to be considered by the Senate, and the committee is in favor of its passage;
- ii) No recommendation: this legislation, either as presented to committee or as amended therein, is to be considered by the Senate without regard to the committee's opinion;
- iii) Do not pass: this legislation, either as presented to committee or as amended therein, is to be considered by the Senate, but the committee is not in favor of its passage; or
- iv) Do fail: this legislation is considered by the committee to be unfit to be considered by the Senate; this recommendation is considered final action on the legislation.

All legislation shall be numbered with the type of legislation (SB for bill, SR for resolution), a single letter indicating the semester in which it was introduced (F for fall, S for spring), the last two digits of the calendar year in which it was introduced, and a two-digit number indicating the order in which it was introduced, beginning with 01.

A resolution shall be any legislation that states the opinion of SGA but does not hold the force of policy. The process for passing a resolution shall be as follows:

- i) The resolution shall be authored by one or more Senator(s), whose name(s) shall be listed on the resolution.
- ii) The resolution shall be presented to the Legislation Committee by its author(s), unless containing articles of impeachment, and be passed from committee with a recommendation listed in this subsection.
- iii) Any resolution receiving a recommendation of do pass, no recommendation, or do not pass from the Legislation Committee shall be included on the agenda for the next legislative day of the Senate following its passage from committee.
- iv) The resolution shall be heard by the Senate and shall be passed by an affirmative simple majority vote.
- v) Upon passage, the resolution shall receive the signatures of the Vice President and President Pro Tempore, and shall be disseminated in accordance with any instructions contained within the legislation.

A bill shall be any legislation that amends any SGA governing document. The process for passing a bill shall be as follows:

- i) The bill shall be authored by one or more Senators, whose names shall be listed on the bill; additional members of the executive or judicial branch or of the student body may be listed as concurring with the bill, but shall not be considered as authors.
- ii) The first reading of the bill shall occur in a meeting of the Legislation Committee. It shall be presented by its author(s) and be passed from committee with a recommendation listed in this subsection.
- iii) Any bill receiving a recommendation of do pass, no recommendation, or do not pass from the Legislation Committee shall be included on the agenda for the next legislative day of the Senate following its passage from committee.
- iv) In its second reading, the bill shall be heard by the Senate and shall be passed to a third reading by an affirmative simple majority vote.
- v) In its third reading, the bill shall be heard by the Senate on the legislative day following the date of its passage from second reading. The bill shall be passed from third reading in accordance with the requirements of the governing document being amended.
- vi) Upon passage, the bill shall receive the signatures of the Vice President and President Pro Tempore. If the bill amends the Constitution or Bylaws, it shall be forwarded to the Student Body President.
- vii) The Student Body President shall have fourteen calendar days, excluding days in which the university is not in session, in which to exercise one of three options:
 - a. The Student Body President may sign the legislation;
 - b. The Student Body President may veto the bill and return it to the Senate along with a written explanation for the veto; such veto may be overridden by a 2/3 affirmative vote of the Senate, and such legislation shall be treated as signed legislation; or
 - c. The Student Body President may take no action and, at the conclusion of the fourteen calendar days, the legislation shall be considered approved without signature and be treated as signed legislation.
- viii) Upon the Student Body President's signature, the passage of fourteen calendar days without action, or the override of a presidential veto, any bill amending the SGA Bylaws or Statutes shall be considered enacted, and any bill amending the SGA Constitution shall be forwarded to the Vice President for Student Affairs for signature.
- ix) Upon receipt of a passed bill amending the SGA Constitution, the Vice President for Student Affairs may sign the legislation, at which time it shall be presented for ratification in accordance with Article V of the Constitution, or may veto the bill and return it to the Senate along with a written explanation for the veto; such veto may be overridden by a 3/4 affirmative vote of the Senate.
- x) If a veto from the Vice President for Student Affairs is overridden by the Senate, such bill shall be presented to the University President for consideration; a signature shall allow such bill to be presented for ratification, while a refusal to sign shall be considered final action on the bill.

Legislation that is considered urgent and necessary for the well-being of SGA or the student body may be considered by the Senate as emergency legislation as follows:

- i) The emergency legislation shall be authored by one or more Senator(s), whose name(s) shall be listed on the legislation.
- ii) The author(s), when recognized by the Chair, may move to consider the legislation as emergency; once seconded, the author(s) shall be permitted one minute to explain the existence of an emergency. Following the author's explanation, the Senate may, by a 2/3 affirmative vote, agree to hear the legislation as emergency. Such legislation shall be

- treated as receiving a committee recommendation of no recommendation and shall be immediately pending.
- iii) Once agreed to be heard by the Senate, emergency legislation shall be treated as standard legislation and acted upon in accordance with the relevant portions of this subsection.

Subsection Five: Regulations for Conducting Session

Following the call to order, a quorum of the Senate shall be a simple majority of those Senators in attendance at the call to order. Quorum shall be verified by the Chair with the assistance of the Senate Secretary and the Parliamentarian. If such quorum is lost during a session, no further business save adjournment may be conducted unless quorum is reestablished.

Subsection Six: General Procedures and Regulations

Each Senator shall be allowed to be absent from no more than four Senate sessions per academic semester. Upon a fifth absence, the President Pro Tempore shall declare that Senator's seat vacant. Any Senator removed due to absences may apply to an open Senate seat belonging to their respective college and be confirmed in accordance with Article II, Section Six of the SGA Constitution.

Each Senator shall be entitled to one vote, which may not be yielded or otherwise given. No Senator shall be compelled to use such vote if they desire to abstain.

All meetings of the Senate shall be opened with a moment of silence, followed by pledges of allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and the Flag of the State of Oklahoma. Any Senator not wishing to be present for this ritual shall be permitted to exit the Senate chambers, and shall be recalled by the Sergeant-at-Arms prior to the calling of the roll or the conducting of business.

Section Three: Bylaws Pertaining to the Executive Branch

Subsection One: The Executive Cabinet

The Student Body President shall form an Executive Cabinet to assist him or her in the duties of the Executive Branch in accordance with Article III, Section Six of the SGA Constitution. The offices of the Executive Cabinet shall include:

- i) a Special Projects Secretary, who shall oversee the planning of all campus-wide events sponsored by SGA and shall chair the Special Projects Committee;
- ii) an Internal Affairs Secretary, who shall oversee the planning of all internal events sponsored by SGA and shall chair the Internal Affairs Committee;
- iii) an Executive Secretary, who shall maintain written records of all acts of the Executive Branch, take minutes at all meetings of the Executive Cabinet, and shall chair the Campus Improvement Committee; and
- iv) any other such offices deemed necessary by the Student Body President for the operation of the Executive Branch, including, but not limited to, a Chief of Staff, a Public Relations Secretary, and liaisons to campus organizations.

All appointments to the Executive Cabinet shall be confirmed by the Senate in accordance with Article III, Section Six of the SGA Constitution.

All members of the Executive Cabinet serve at the pleasure of the Student Body President and all duties within the Executive Branch not reserved by SGA governing documents may be assigned to such Cabinet members as the Student Body President sees fit, provided that no duty assigned shall infringe upon powers reserved for the elected officers of the Executive Branch or powers reserved to the Legislative and Judicial Branches.

Subsection Two: Impeachment of Elected Officers

The Student Body President, Vice President, and Treasurer (“elected officers”) are subject to impeachment in accordance with Article III, Section Eight of the SGA Constitution. The procedure for impeachment shall conform to the procedures for impeachment of a Senator set forth in this document, except when conflicting with the aforementioned constitutional Article; on any point of conflict, the Constitution shall hold precedence. Following the impeachment and conviction of any elected officer, in addition to those notifications prescribed for impeachment of a Senator, the Chief Justice shall ensure that notification is given to the student body via printed and electronic means as permitted by the university administration.

Subsection Three: Operation of the Student Government Center

The elected officers of SGA shall maintain and operate the Student Government Center (“Center”) on behalf of SGA for the purpose of providing facilities for committee meetings, maintaining office space for members of SGA, and providing copy and other services to the students of the university. The hours of operation for the Center shall be at the discretion of the elected officers, provided the following conditions are met:

- i) The center shall be open to the public no less than twelve clock hours per calendar week when classes are in session, excepting weeks shortened by holiday or closure;
- ii) The Center shall be open to the public no less than three weekdays per calendar week when classes are in session, excepting weeks shortened by holiday or closure;
- iii) At least one elected officer shall be present at the Center at all times during its hours of operation; and
- iv) The Senate shall confirm, by an affirmative simple majority vote, the hours of operation for the Center and any changes made to such hours of operation.

The hours of operation for the center shall be clearly posted at the center and disseminated to the student body via electronic means as permitted by the university administration.

In the event that, due to illness or incapacitation, no elected officer shall be able to staff the center for a scheduled hour of operation, the Student Body President shall provide written notice to the Chief Justice and President Pro Tempore of such fact prior to the unstaffed hour; when such notice is provided, the elected officers shall be considered in compliance with this subsection.

Subsection Four: General Procedures and Regulations

The Student Body Treasurer shall be an ex officio member of the Audit Committee, and shall make available to such committee all financial records of SGA for the academic year.

The Student Body President shall, when directed by the university administration, make student appointments to university committees, including, but not limited to, the Academic Appeals Committee and the Allocations Committee.

All contracts entered into on behalf of SGA shall be approved by an affirmative simple majority vote of the Senate (if the Senate is in session) and receive signatures from the Student Body President and the university Vice President for Student Affairs. Responsibility for compliance with such contracts shall belong to the Student Body President.

The elected officers of SGA shall receive honorarium in accordance with Article III, Section Seven of the SGA Constitution. Requests for honorarium shall be presented to the Senate, who shall approve the amount by a 2/3 affirmative vote. The Senate shall be empowered to amend the amount of honorarium, provided the total amount per elected officer shall not exceed a cap of five percent of the annual SGA budget; if awarded an amount below this cap, the elected officer may present a request for the difference at a later date.

Section Four: Bylaws Pertaining to the Judicial Branch

Subsection One: Sessions of the Court

The Supreme Court shall convene under the Chief Justice no less than once monthly during the regular academic year. The schedule for regular sessions shall be posted in the Student Government Center no later than one week prior to the first regular meeting. Special sessions may be called by the Chief Justice as needed.

Quorum of the Supreme Court shall be those Justices in attendance for regular sessions, and a majority of seated Justices for special sessions.

The Chief Justice shall preside over sessions of the Supreme Court. In the absence of the Chief Justice, the most senior Associate Justice shall preside.

The specifics regarding procedure during sessions of the Supreme Court shall be laid out in the standing rules of the Judicial Branch, except as specified in this document and the SGA Constitution.

Subsection Two: General Procedures and Regulations

All rulings by the Supreme Court, including those regarding organizational constitutions or charters, shall be made within one calendar month of the request for such ruling during the regular academic year.

All rulings, including both majority and minority opinions, shall be made available in the form of a written monthly report. Each report shall be maintained in the Student Government Center and be accessible for review by any student, faculty, staff, or administrator during the Center's hours of operation.

Section Five: Bylaws Pertaining to the Student Government Association as a Whole

Subsection One: Elections

The election of President, Vice President, and Treasurer of SGA shall be overseen by the Election Committee, which shall be an ad hoc committee formed in accordance with Section Two of this document.

The Chair of the Election Committee shall be:

- i) The President Pro Tempore for all elections in which he or she is not a candidate;
- ii) The Deputy President Pro Tempore for any election in which the President Pro Tempore is a candidate; or
- iii) The Student Body President for any election in which both the President Pro Tempore and Deputy President Pro Tempore are candidates, including Senatorial elections.
- iv) If all of the above-named officers are candidates in a given election, the Senate shall confirm, by a 2/3 affirmative vote, a non-candidate Senator to serve as Chair.

For all elections, the date or dates for the election shall be set by the Chair of the Election Committee and announced no less than one calendar month prior to the date of the election. The Committee shall set a deadline for filing that is no less than one calendar week following the announcement of the date or dates of the election. No campaigning shall be conducted by, or on behalf of, any candidate prior to the closing of the filing period.

The Dean of Students must approve all campaign materials before they are displayed on campus. Campaign materials may not include any signs hung on any glass, marble, or painted surface, any signs held by stakes in the ground, any mailbox flyers or windshield flyers, or any other campaign material deemed inappropriate by the Election Committee or the Dean of Students.

All candidates shall meet eligibility requirements for office, as verified by the SGA faculty advisor(s), prior to having their name included on an election ballot.

The Election Committee shall be empowered to create any additional rules and regulations as it deems necessary. Such rules may be overturned by a 2/3 vote of the Senate. All rules regarding elections, including the relevant sections of this document and the SGA Constitution, shall be made available to candidates through the Student Government Center and the Office of the Dean of Students.

Subsection Two: Oath of Office

- i. The oath with which all members of the Student Government Association are installed in office shall be: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office upon which I am about to enter, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the Student Government Association of Southwestern Oklahoma State University."
- ii. The oath of office must be administered in the presence of the Senate during a regularly scheduled Senate meeting.
- iii. The Chief Justice shall keep a thorough record of the dates and names of all persons to whom the oath of office is administered. Said record shall be shared with the Senate Secretary in order to ensure that all persons on the Senate Roll have taken the oath of office. (SB F1101)

Subsection Three: Funds

The funds of SGA shall be deposited with the office of the University Bursar. No SGA funds may be spent without the signature of the Student Body Treasurer and the consent and approval of the Senate, except by the Student Body President during the summer interim. All funds spent must be in accordance with the SGA annual budget.

Subsection Four: General Procedures and Regulations

Any member of SGA who is removed from the organization due to impeachment shall be ineligible to rejoin SGA for the remainder of the academic year.

Section Six: Amending the Bylaws

All amendments to these Bylaws shall be presented to the Senate as a bill, passed by a 2/3 affirmative vote of the Senate, and signed in accordance with Section Two, Subsection Four of this document. Upon the signature of the Student Body President, such amendments shall take immediate effect.