

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT CODE OF LAWS**  
**TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**ARTICLE I – PURPOSE, STRUCTURE, AND DEFINITIONS**

The Senate and Graduate House of Representatives shall establish, through legislation, a Student Government Code of Laws, which shall outline policy and procedures relating to the overall operation of the Student Government and establish procedures for provisions found but not detailed within the Student Government Constitution.

**SECTION 1: NAME**

- A. The name of this document shall be the Student Government Code of Laws.

**SECTION 2: PURPOSE**

- A. The purpose of this document shall be to establish rules and procedures concerning the interaction between the three branches, to ensure the integrity of their separation, as well as the validity of their checks and balances upon one another.
- B. To outline policy and procedures relating to the overall operation of the Student Government and establish procedures for provisions found but not detailed within the Constitution.
- C. And to establish, through legislative additions to this document, additional agencies of the Student Government to handle specific issues on behalf of the Student Body.

**SECTION 3: STRUCTURE**

- A. The Senate, Graduate House of Representatives, and the Supreme Court of the Student Government may establish for themselves a document outlining each chamber's internal policies not included in this document, which may be amended without authorization from any other branch of government, but which must not conflict with the Constitution, Code of Laws, infringe or affect the powers and the responsibilities of the separate branches and chambers.

**SECTION 4: DEFINITIONS**

- A. This section will define specific language for the purpose of clarity and concision.
  - 1. Unless otherwise stated, "President" refers to the President of the Student Government.
  - 2. Unless otherwise stated, "Vice President" refers to the Vice President of the Student Government.
  - 3. Unless otherwise stated, "House Leader" refers to the leader of the Graduate House of Representatives.
  - 4. Unless otherwise stated, "Chief Justice" refers to the Supreme Court Chief Justice.

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**ARTICLE II – LEGISLATURE**

**SECTION 1: THE LEGISLATURE**

- A. The Senate and Graduate House of Representatives of the Student Government will follow the outlined “Rules of Procedure”, which may be amended.

**SECTION 2: BUDGET AND FINANCE**

- A. The Senate will be vested with the power of the budget and finance. All bills for the expenditure of funds by the Student Government will originate and be finalized in the Senate and by the Senate.
- B. ANNUAL BUDGET AUTHORIZATION
1. The President will submit an annual budget to the Senate by the third (Fall) meeting of the Senate.
  2. Provisions of the Annual Budget Authorization proposal:
    - Must contain all the expenses of the fiscal year. The fiscal year will be defined by Texas State University Student Involvement & Engagement under the Division of Student Success.
    - Must be categorized into specific expenses, but does not need to be a line-by-line expense budget.
    - Must have the following mandatory expenses; Office supplies, Graduate House expenses, Senate expenses, Freshman Council, Judiciary, Executive expenses, phone usage, material management, wages, travel expenses and other utilities. All other expenses may be added by the President before submitting the proposal.
    - The Graduate House will always receive a budget.
    - Be reviewed by the Finance Director and made into a Senate bill by a Senator.
    - May contain a category for expenses while the Senate is not in session, which includes the summer and holiday breaks.
    - Must be entertained as a Senate bill.
    - Expenditures must not exceed the categorized amounts allocated by the Senate in the authorization bill.

**SECTION 3: GOVERNING DOCUMENTS COMMITTEE**

- A. The Governing Documents Committee will be established within the Legislative Branch as a select committee by a Simple Resolution passed in the Senate.
- B. The Governing Documents Committee must be comprised of 2 members from the Judicial Branch, 2 members of the Executive Branch, and 2 members of the Legislative Branch. The Student Body President and Chief Justice must serve on the Committee. The Senators shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Senate with approval of 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Senate, present and in good standing. The Representatives shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the House with approval of 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Representatives, present and in good standing. The Supreme Court shall be appointed by the Chief Justice with approval

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of 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Supreme Court, present and in good standing. The President shall appoint the member of the executive branch alongside them.

- C. The Governing Documents Committee will meet on an as-needed basis, when called by the Student Government President, Vice President, the committee chair or when business warrants.
- D. All bills to create or amend Student Government governing documents, including, but not limited to, the Constitution and Code of Laws, Rules of Procedures, Code of Ethics, or the Election Code, shall be forwarded to and be reviewed by the Governing Documents Committee before its first reading in a legislative body.
- E. The Governing Documents Committee shall review the legislation to ensure that the language does not introduce unneeded ambiguity, does not conflict with any other language of the Student Government governing documents, and does not conflict with known University policy.
- F. The Governing Documents Committee will forward its official majority recommendation, which may include, but is not limited to, suggested changes to the author of the legislation.
- G. The Governing Documents Committee may review any Student Government governing document, including, but not limited to, the Constitution, Code of Laws, Rules of Procedures, Code of Ethics, or the Election Code, to ensure consistency across all documents and to address any clarity issues, issues arising from Student Government Supreme Court rulings, and concerns of the University administration.
- H. Members of the Governing Documents Committee may write legislation to resolve issues found during any review of the Student Government governing document. This legislation shall be brought before the Senate and/or the House of Graduate Representatives as per the legislative body's Rules of Procedure.
- I. Any change to the Code of Laws and/or Constitution requires the formation and convening of this Committee. Proposed changes to the Code and/or Constitution must first come as a recommendation from the Governing Documents Committee. The legislative branch may only vote to reject or accept the changes set forth by the Governing Documents Committee, and all amendments must go through the Committee. After the adoption of changes from the committee, the Committee must be dissolved. A new committee must be convened if new changes are to be added after its dissolution.
- J. After the adoption of changes from the Committee, the Committee must be dissolved. A new committee must be convened if new changes are to be added after its dissolution.
- K. The Committee can only vote amongst themselves if they reach a quorum of a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority of its members.
- L. The Committee may appoint a Chair and/or Vice Chair by an internal vote. If this choice is made by the committee, the Chair or Vice Chair must be present at all Committee meetings.

**SECTION 4: JOINT RESOLUTIONS**

- A. A Joint Resolution comes from the legislature.
- B. A Joint Resolution is a formal statement expressing the opinion, will, or intent of the Student Government as a representative body of the students at Texas State University.
- C. Joint Resolutions shall include "BE IT RESOLVED" clause(s) stating the idea expressed,

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and it shall include “WHEREAS” clause(s) stating the reasons, conditions, or ideas as to why the resolution is needed.

- D. Joint Resolutions require a majority vote of the Senate and House of Graduate Representatives, while in a joint session or a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote of both the Senate and the Graduate House of Representatives, in their respective chamber.

**ARTICLE III – EXECUTIVE**

**SECTION 1: THE EXECUTIVE CABINET**

**A. THE PRESIDENT**

1. The President is required to serve a minimum of 25 hours in office per week during the Spring and Fall semesters.
2. The President must be in attendance at all Senate Meetings barring extenuating circumstances. Multiple unexcused absences from Senate Meetings may be considered dereliction of duty.
3. The President shall have the authority to create an Executive Cabinet within their administration.
4. All cabinet positions shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by a simple majority in the Senate.
5. The President may appoint cabinet members during a Senate Recess for an interim term. The Senate must vote on confirmation at the next meeting.
6. The codified cabinet roles are simply suggestions, aside from the role of Freshman Council Director. For their respective term, a President may add, combine, or eliminate the cabinet positions as they deem appropriate.
7. All cabinet members shall be considered members of the Executive Branch.
8. All cabinet members report to the President.
9. All cabinet positions, duties, and responsibilities shall be outlined in this document.
10. All cabinet positions shall be relinquished upon the end of the President's term.
11. All cabinet positions shall report to either house of the legislature upon request from either the Senator or the Graduate House.
12. The President may add or remove cabinet members to their discretion.
13. The President may form Student Government Departments at their discretion. They may nominate students to serve in departmental roles with confirmation by the Senate.
14. The President has veto power over all votes in the Senate aside from impeachment trials.
15. The President may form Executive Committees at their discretion to assist their directors in carrying out their duties and projects.
16. The President may delegate the responsibilities granted to them under the Constitution and the rules and regulations of Student Government to Cabinet Members or to Executive Staff within the Office of the President. The President must retain ultimate responsibility for the proper execution of delegated responsibilities.

**B. VICE-PRESIDENT**

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1. The Vice President is required to serve a minimum of 20 hours per week in office during the Spring and Fall semesters.
2. The Vice President must be in attendance at all Senate Meetings barring extenuating circumstances. Multiple unexcused absences from Senate Meetings may be considered dereliction of duty.
3. Chairperson of the Senate and presides over all formal meetings and legislative business of the Senate.
4. Oversee the distribution of Senate meeting agendas and public postings of all Senate records.
5. Post the agenda through the proper channel by Friday before the Senate meeting, at noon. Post the Senate minutes to the proper locations 2 days following the Senate meeting by 11:59PM.
6. Forward passed legislation to the President for signature.
7. Be responsible for informing the Senate on the status of all active legislation.
8. Be responsible for maintaining the Student Government Legislation on the Bobcat Organization Hub.

**C. CHIEF OF STAFF**

1. Assist the President with communication with the cabinet.
2. Attend all cabinet meetings.
3. Help with scheduling group and one-on-one cabinet meetings.
4. Assist the president with representing and managing the executive branch.
5. Help with responding to emails in the Student Government mailbox.
6. Be responsible for carrying out all official correspondence for the Student Senate, including the delivery of the Minutes to the Advisors and any other member of the campus community who requests a copy.
7. Take attendance at Senate meetings.
8. Take minutes at Senate meetings.
9. Take votes by roll call for any piece of legislation.
10. Keep an accurate and up-to-date Student Senate roster.

**D. DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

The Director of Government Affairs will advise the President on matters relating to local, state, and federal government and serve as their primary ambassador to government entities outside of Texas State University, and will:

1. Sit on the Executive Cabinet
2. Be the President's representative from the Student Government in federal, state, and local government, and must act as such and not speak on behalf of his or her own preferences.
3. Attend weekly or bi-weekly City of San Marcos Council Meetings.
4. Serve on the City of San Marcos Neighborhood Commission.
5. Assist the President in representing the Texas State Student Body at the local, state, and federal levels of government.
6. Advise the cabinet on issues ongoing in the local, state, and federal government.

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7. Be or designate someone to be the City Council Liaison.

**E. DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING**

Will be the Chief Community Outreach Officer of the Student Government and advise the President on issues affecting different student groups at Texas State University. In addition, the Director of Community Outreach will:

1. Sit on the Executive Cabinet.
2. Coordinate and oversee a Community Outreach program,
3. Meet with leaders of organizations from different student organizations who come to the Student Government with concerns and ideas.
4. Coordinate the Student Government events.
5. Coordinate any other Student Government ceremonial or programmatic events.

**F. DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

Will be the Chief Financial Officer and advise the President on the budget and expenditure of Student Government funds and the various funding programs established by law. In addition, the Director of Finance will:

1. Sit on the Executive Cabinet.
2. Keep track of Student Government expenses and awarding of funds.
3. Report on the budget and make monthly reports at the Senate meeting for both fall and spring semester.
4. Oversee the distribution of funds.

**G. DIRECTOR OF MARKETING**

Will be the Chief Public Relations Officer of the Student Government and advise the President on issues of student outreach and public relations. In addition, the Director of Marketing will:

1. Sit on the Executive Cabinet.
2. Meet with leaders of media organizations to disseminate accurate information pertaining to the affairs of the Student Government.
3. Maintain the Student Government social media and other media applications, an
4. Maintain the brand, standard, logo, and formal seal of Student Government.

**H. DIRECTOR OF THE FRESHMAN COUNCIL**

1. Sit on the Executive Cabinet.
2. Attend Freshman Council meetings and Freshman Council Executive meetings.
3. Supervise the Freshman Council and be a coordinator for Freshman Council.
4. Supervise Vice-Directors
5. Provide Student Government-focused leadership and technical training.
6. Work to provide a mentorship program between the Freshman Council and Senators.

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**I. DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABILITY**

1. Sit on the Executive Cabinet.
2. Sit on the University Sustainability Committee
3. Must lead efforts to create a more sustainable university.

**SECTION 2: FRESHMAN COUNCIL**

This council shall be known as the Freshman Council and shall be comprised of a minimum of 10 first-year students approved by the President. Its director shall be known as the Director of Freshman Council.

- A. The Council's objective shall be:
  1. To teach the selected freshmen about Student Government and prepare them for future service to Student Government and Texas State University.
  2. To familiarize the selected freshmen with campus pride and traditions.
  3. To provide leadership learning opportunities, centered on Student Government.
  4. To advise the President and Senate on freshmen concerns.
  5. To be in good disciplinary standing.
  6. Have one representative appointed by the Director of the Council to the Senate.
  7. To increase visibility of Student Government to the Freshman class.
- B. The President and Vice President of Student Government, in consultation with advisors and the Freshman Council Director, will establish, each year, a standard application and interview process for council seats and set a deadline for application entry, and will review said applications and interview prospective candidates. Upon completion of interviews, members will be appointed to the Council.
- C. The Council will have no legislative power but may create proposals on behalf of the freshman class that will be submitted and approved by the Council Faculty/Staff Advisor and forwarded to the Student Government President and Vice President.
- D. No member of the Council may continue to serve as a council member if the individual is placed on academic probation and/or unfit disciplinary standing at any point during their term as a council member.
- E. Freshman Council Meetings cannot be cancelled without prior approval of the President and a majority vote of present freshman council members.
- F. All Freshman Council members should be classified as freshmen according to University Policy. The exception to this would be first-year students who are classified as upperclassmen because of earned credit hours from high school (i.e., AP tests or Dual Credit).
- G. The Freshman Council curriculum shall be presented by the Director to the rest of the Freshman Council at the first meeting in the fall semester.

**SECTION 3: Executive Compensation**

- A. The President, Vice President, and Chief of Staff shall be compensated for time and services provided to the student body. This payment will comply with all Federal, State,

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and Local laws.

- B. The wage rate shall increase without a vote of the Senate in the event of a mandated local, state, or federal pay raise. Such an increase will not go into effect until the next fiscal year.
- C. The President shall receive a stipend of \$535.00 per pay period in the fall and spring in session and a stipend of \$388.00 during winter, spring, and summer break.
- D. The Vice President shall receive a stipend of \$395.00 per pay period when classes in the fall and spring are in session and a stipend of \$194.00 during winter, spring, and summer break.
- E. The Chief of Staff is entitled to receive up to an equivalent of an hourly wage of \$9.00 per hour for a maximum of 30 hours per pay period from September 1 to May 31 and a wage of \$9.00 per hour for a maximum of 15 hours per pay period from June 1 to August 31.

**ARTICLE IV – JUDICIAL**

**SECTION 1: THE SUPREME COURT**

- A. The judicial power of Student Government shall be vested in the Supreme Court.

**SECTION 2: COURT PROCEDURES**

**A. FILING OF COMPLAINTS**

- a. Any student, except for Supreme Court Justices, may file a complaint with the Supreme Court.

**B. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

- 1. No case must be heard by the Supreme Court more than 60 business days after the alleged act, occurrence, or transaction that constitutes the basis of the case.
- 2. Should a contested action occur during a recess of the Supreme Court, the start date for the statute of limitations must begin on the first business day that the Supreme Court resumes.
- 3. Actions outside of the 60-business-day statute of limitations are only admissible to establish a pattern of behavior related to the case and is completely admissible as evidence.

**C. TIMELINE – COMPLAINT**

- 1. All complaints filed must receive a response of accepted or dismissed within 5 business days, except for election complaints. Election complaints must be responded to within 2 days. If a complaint is accepted, the Supreme Court will notify the accused through a Notice of Complaint. The Notice must include the date, time, and location of the hearing. Once a Notice of a Complaint is sent, a hearing must be held within 10 business days, but not less than 5 business days. Election hearings must be held within 5 days, but not less than 2 days.
- 2. The Supreme Court must notify the petitioner, respondent, Student Body President, Vice President, VP Pro-Tempore, and Advisors of the Notice of Complaint.

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3. A Notice of Complaint and the scheduled hearing must be published on the Student Government website for public review within 12 hours of their issuance.

**D. FAILURE TO ACT ON COMPLAINTS**

1. If the Supreme Court cannot reach a quorum by the deadline to issue the Notice of Complaint, the Chief Justice will have sole jurisdiction to hear and decide the case.
2. If the Supreme Court does not reply to a complaint within 2 days, the complainant may file an appeal to the Student Government Advisor to hear the case.

**E. DISMISSAL OF COMPLAINTS**

The Supreme Court may only dismiss a complaint if:

1. The complaint violates the statute of limitations.
2. The complaint is deemed to be outside the board's jurisdiction.
3. The complaint is clearly not a violation of the Code, because the action is expressly permitted by the S.G.C. or previous Court rulings.

**F. INJUNCTION**

1. At the time a Notice of Election Complaint is issued, the Supreme Court Chief Justice may issue a temporary injunction if they determine that such action is necessary to prevent undue or adverse effects on any candidate. Any injunction, once issued, will remain in effect until a decision of the Supreme Court is announced after the hearing or until rescinded by the Supreme Court.

**G. PUBLIC INFORMATION**

1. All Supreme Court hearings, proceedings, records, including those collected under the Election Code, and meetings must be open to the public, except for the deliberations and records related to deliberations that determine the outcome of hearings.

**H. PRESENT AT HEARING**

1. All parties involved in a complaint, if called to do so by the Supreme Court, will present themselves at the hearing or authorize an agent in writing to serve during the proceedings in their absence.

**I. RIGHT TO COUNSEL**

1. Parties may be accompanied by a maximum of two Texas State students from whom they can receive counsel. They must notify the court prior to the hearing.

**J. SUPREME COURT HEARING PROCEDURE**

The Supreme Court will determine the format for the hearing but must invite both the complaining and responding parties to appear physically before the Supreme Court to discuss the issues through a complaint, answer and rebuttal, format, when applicable. The purpose of the hearing is to gather the information necessary to make a decision, order, or ruling that will resolve a dispute.

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To this purpose, the following rules must prevail at all hearings:

1. Complaining parties will be allowed no more than two witnesses; however, the Supreme Court may call other witnesses if it deems necessary. Opening Statements from the Petitioner and Respondent may last no longer than 10 minutes; however, examination and questioning from the Court will last as long as the Court requires.
2. All questions and discussions by the parties involved in the dispute will be directed to the Supreme Court.
3. There will be no direct or cross-examination of any party or witness by complaining or responding to parties during hearings.
4. Reasonable time limits may be set by the Supreme Court, provided they give fair and equal treatment to both sides.

**K. DECISIONS**

1. Decisions, orders, and rulings are all synonymous terms and must be agreed to by a majority of the Supreme Court present at the hearing where the case was heard and formatted similarly to that found in the templates.
2. If a Supreme Court member is not present at the hearing, they may not contribute to the decision-making process and will not have a vote.
3. A written syllabus must be delivered within 24 hours of a decision made by the Supreme Court but must be followed up with a written Opinion.
4. A written opinion must be delivered within 10 business days after the hearing. For election complaints, this must be done within 5 days.
5. The written ruling must set forth the findings of fact by the Supreme Court and the interpretations of the Governing Documents that support the Court's decision.
6. Written rulings and Operating Memorandums will set a precedent and will guide future Supreme Courts in its proceedings.
7. The Supreme Court must adhere to all precedents set in previous terms. However, the court may overturn a precedent if it finds it to be an egregious misinterpretation of the governing documents.
8. The Supreme Court is not a legal proceeding, and as such, the threshold of evidence is not a finding of fact.
9. Decisions will be made based on a preponderance of the evidence. A preponderance of the evidence decision is based on what is most likely to have occurred and the greater weight of evidence submitted.
10. The Supreme Court must publicly issue alongside the majority opinion any dissenting or minority opinions.

**L. REQUEST FOR DOCUMENTS OR TESTIMONY**

1. The Supreme Court may compel any candidate, worker, agent, or member of the Student Government to appear and/or to provide documentation as necessary for each case. Failure by any member of the Student Government, candidate, worker, or agent to comply with this request will result in their disqualification from candidacy and may result in impeachment proceedings.

**M. FAILURE TO APPEAR**

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1. Failure to appear at a hearing of the Court will not result in a suspension of the hearing. The Court is to hear and decide the case even in the absence of those associated with it.

**N. ADVISORY OPINIONS**

1. Questions of interpretation must be submitted to the Supreme Court by any Texas State Student aside from active Supreme Court Justices. All Supreme Court opinions are binding for all Student Government members and candidates.

**ARTICLE V – IMPEACHMENT**

**SECTION 1: JUDICIAL AND LEGISLATIVE POWERS**

- A. The Legislature has the sole responsibility of voting and removing members of student government. For the executive and judicial branches, this shall be done by the student senate. For graduate house positions, this shall be done by the graduate house.
- B. The Supreme Court has the sole authority to rule whether the violation that the defendant is charged with is a violation of our governing documents.

**SECTION 2: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

All members of the Senate, Judiciary, Graduate House of Representatives, and Executive branches must be removed from office by impeachment.

**SECTION 3: IMPEACHABLE OFFENSES**

- A. Violation of the ethical clause of the code of laws.
- B. Egregious criminal convictions by law enforcement.
- C. Dereliction of duty. This is especially applicable to all the paid positions of student government.
- D. Violations of the Election Code that come to light after the election and would have resulted in a disqualification of the candidate if they had come to light prior to the swearing in of the candidate.
- E. Egregious violations of the Governing Documents.
- F. Undermining the function of student government.
- G. Violating the absence policy of the member's branch.
- H. If an offense is committed that is not listed here, then the Court has jurisdiction to decide if it is impeachable. The Court must do so in case of offenses that are egregious in nature and have a similar severity and/or effect as those listed above.

**SECTION 4: IMPEACHMENT PROCESS**

- A. Any member of Student Government may file impeachment charges against another member of Student Government. The initial filing must be made to the Supreme Court.
- B. The Supreme Court must issue a Notice of Impeachment to the defendant, the petitioner, the President, Vice President, VP pro tempore, and the Student Government Advisors.

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This must be done within 2 business days of receiving the charge.

- C. The Court must then decide on the validity of the impeachment charge, i.e., the court must decide whether the charged offense is an impeachable offense as listed in the Code of Laws. The court must issue a detailed opinion on its finding within 7 days of the issuing the Notice of Impeachment. A syllabus may not be issued prior to the written opinion. Due to the seriousness of impeachment, the Court must issue the syllabus and the written opinion at the same time.
- D. If the court decides that the offense is impeachable, it must forward the decision to the appropriate legislature. For charges brought against the executive branch, judicial branch, and the Senate, the court shall forward it to the Senate. For charges brought against the graduate house, the court shall forward it to the graduate house for further proceedings.
- E. In cases where the impeachment charge is brought against members of the judicial branch, the court still has the authority to decide on whether the charge is impeachable or not. However, the accused member must recuse. In this scenario, if the court finds a verdict of the offense not being impeachable, the Senate may overrule this decision by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority in this case only.
- F. The Senate must conduct the impeachment trial. For cases involving the members of the graduate house, this shall be done by the graduate house, which shall still follow all the rules and procedures set forth in this article.
- G. After the Court forwards the decision of the offense being impeachable, the trial starts at the next meeting of the Senate.

**SECTION 5: IMPEACHMENT TRIAL**

- A. At the first impeachment meeting, the Chief Justice must read the court's decision to find the offense impeachable. The Senate must vote on two members who shall lead the trial at this meeting. They shall be referred to as the impeachment managers. The member of Student Government that filed the charge may be one of the two members, or may join this team as the third member with confirmation by the Senate.
- B. The Chief Justice presides over the impeachment trial. In cases brought against the judicial branch, the President shall preside over the trial. They have no voting or decision making power. They supervise the fairness of the trial, make procedural decisions, and oversee the process in a fair and impartial manner. At the first meeting, the Chief Justice must establish hearing and procedural rules, which shall be confirmed by a simple majority of the chamber.
- C. The impeachment hearing must occur at the next public meeting of the Senate.
- D. Both parties shall have 15 minutes each for opening statements. The impeachment managers must go first, followed by the defendant.
- E. After opening statements, both parties will have an equal amount of time to present their evidence and call any witnesses. This time frame must be set by the chair of the impeachment trial at the first impeachment meeting. The impeachment managers must present their case first.
- F. After the managers present their case, the defendant shall have 10 minutes to cross question the managers. The same time shall be awarded to the managers after the defendant presents their case.
- G. At the conclusion of cross questioning, the Senate floor shall have 30 minutes to ask

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questions to either side.

- H. At the conclusion of the questions from the floor, the presiding officer shall call for a 15-minute recess.
- I. The Senate chamber shall vote on convicting and removing the defendant after this recess.
- J. A quorum is required to hold this vote. In case of deliberate quorum breaking to avoid the occurrence of the vote, the presiding officer may decide to continue the vote.
- K. The vote shall be done via a paper ballot and must be anonymous. The presiding officer shall tally the votes and announce the results.

**SECTION 6: CONVICTION**

- A. A 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority is required to convict and remove the defendant.
- B. If the Senate votes to convict and remove a member, they shall no longer hold their position after the end of the announcement of the results.
- C. Any member convicted and removed from Student Government is barred from Student Government participation.
- D. Members of Student Government who have left office may be impeached and convicted after their terms end for actions committed during their term in office. If convicted, they are barred from Student Government participation.
- E. If a defendant is found not guilty, they may not be tried again for the same offense.

**SECTION 7: VACANCIES**

- A. In case the President is removed, the VP becomes President and must nominate a new VP that the Senate confirms.
- B. If the VP is removed, the President must nominate a new VP that the Senate confirms. During impeachment proceedings, the VP pro tempore will assume the responsibilities of the VP as the chair of the Senate. This shall apply to all Senate business except the impeachment trial. As stated previously, the Chief Justice shall chair the impeachment trial, with the exception of an impeachment trial of the Chief Justice, which shall be chaired by the President.
- C. If the Chief Justice is removed, the Court must internally vote on a new Chief Justice, and the newly vacant associate justice position may be filled via the normal process outlined in this Code.
- D. If the VP Pro Tempore or the Parliamentarian is removed, the Senate must vote on a new member for the respective position.
- E. If the Graduate House Leader is removed, the Graduate House may nominate a new leader.
- F. If any member of the Senate, Graduate House, Executive branch, or the Judicial branch not listed above is removed, the vacancy shall be filled by the usual procedure outlined in this code.

**ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS**

**SECTION 1: LEGISLATIVE ADDITIONS**

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- A. This Code of Laws may be revised, added to, or edited through the convening of the Governing Documents Committee (as outlined in Article II, Section 3).
- B. The recommendations of the Committee must be codified by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority vote in the Senate.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT SENATE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**ARTICLE I - STRUCTURE**

**SECTION 1: SENATORIAL ROLES**

**A. VICE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENT BODY**

- 1. Preside over all formal meetings as Chairperson. Qualifications, powers, and duties shall be established and set forth in the Constitution.

**B. VICE PRESIDENT AS CHAIRPERSON**

- 1. Have no vote in the Senate except in the event of a tie or when the vote is by paper ballot.
- 2. Maintain order at all times.
- 3. Be thoroughly versed in parliamentary procedure.
- 4. Not debate from the Chair except in the case of an appeal.
- 5. At no time decide on a question involving the constitutionality of a piece of legislation.
- 6. Follow the order of business as prescribed by the agenda unless the rules are suspended.
- 7. Remain impartial at all times while conducting meetings.
- 8. Make clear to all Senators the issue in question.
- 9. Execute all powers and duties found in the Constitution and Code of Laws and ensure that functions are in compliance with all University Policies and the Rules and Regulations of the Texas State University System Board of Regents.
- 10. Appoint Internal Senate Committee Chairpersons with a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
- 11. Remove the Chairperson and/or members of any standing committees for not fulfilling the responsibilities taken while under oath.
- 12. Be the only person authorized to recognize individuals wishing to speak during a Senate meeting.
- 13. Not recognize anyone except Senators, the President, Advisors, and Ex-Officio members during the Old Business and New Business sections of the agenda, in a fair and impartial manner.
- 14. In a fair and impartial manner, allow the public to speak during public forum.

**C. VICE-PRESIDENT PRO-TEMPORE**

- 1. Assume the position of interim Vice-President in the event of the Vice-President's absence.

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2. Be a Student Senator.
3. Be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Senate.
4. Chair the Nominations and Appointments Committee.
5. Provide leadership of the Senate under the Vice-President.

**D. SENATE PARLIAMENTARIAN**

1. Be confirmed by two-thirds approval of the Student Senate.
2. Have a thorough knowledge of the Student Senate and Parliamentary procedures, including Robert's Rules of Order and the Rules of Procedure.
3. Have a final say in all matters of procedural conflict on the Student Senate floor.
4. Point out serious errors in procedure to the Chairperson of the Student Senate.
5. Record all questions of order and other questions of procedure for future reference.
6. Pass these records to the Chief of Staff at the end of each Senate meeting.
7. Keep time during periods of limited debate and/or speech.
8. Remove any person deemed out of order by the Chairperson or by themselves.

**E. SENATORS**

1. All elected senatorial candidates will be sworn in at the joint session with the newly inaugurated Student Body President.
2. The term of a Senator shall last from their swearing in until a new President is inaugurated.
3. A Senator representing their college must be removed from that position if they change colleges during their term. If there is an available at-large position or applicable college seat, the active senator may be switched to that seat through a simple resolution presented and voted on by the Senate.
4. Senators shall be required to attend all Senate and Committee meetings.
5. The absence policy shall be strictly enforced.
6. Vacancies occurring in the Student Senate may be filled by the appointment of new Senators via the Nominations and Appointments Committee.
7. All Senators will serve on one Standing Senate Committee.

**ARTICLE II - LEGISLATIVE AND SENATE PROCEDURES**

**SECTION 1: THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE SENATE**

- A. Have the power to initiate the impeachment of a member of Student Government. Conviction of members shall require a two-thirds vote of the Senators present and in good standing.
- B. Approve or disapprove recommended appointments made by the President to student positions by a majority vote of the Senate.
- C. May require the Vice President to establish ad-hoc and standing committees to study problems and propose legislation and programs.
- D. Have the power to override a veto by the President with a two-thirds majority vote of the present members.
- E. Be responsible for approving the Election Code.
- F. May sponsor legislation, so long as it has a second sponsor by a full Senator.

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- G. Are required to attend all Senate and committee meetings. The absence policy shall be enforced by the Constitution.
- H. May compel the President to inform them about legislation that has been passed to understand where it is in the process.

**SECTION 2: SENATE PROCEDURES**

- A. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised Edition will be the sole source for all questions of parliamentary procedures unless otherwise provided by the Rules of Procedure.
- B. The Student Senate shall meet bi-weekly of the Fall and Spring semesters, beginning with the first full week of regular classes. The meetings shall be called on Monday nights, and the place shall be determined by the Chairperson. The senate will decide the meeting times with a simple resolution.
- C. Committees shall meet bi-weekly of the Fall and Spring semesters, in alternate with the present Senate Meetings. The meetings shall be called on Monday nights and the place shall be arranged by the Chairperson of the Senate. The senate will decide the meeting times with a simple resolution.
- D. No official business may be conducted by the Student Senate without the presence of a quorum. A quorum for business conduct shall be two-thirds of the Student Senate membership. Membership shall be determined by the total number of Senators on the roll and in good standing.
- E. Membership shall be determined by the total number of Senators active on the roll at the time a meeting is called to order.
- F. Order of Business shall be determined by the agenda. The general order of business may be:
  - 1. Call to Order
  - 2. Roll Call
  - 3. Approval of Minutes
  - 4. Guest Speakers
  - 5. Public Forum
  - 6. Presidents Report
  - 7. Vice Presidents Report
  - 8. Committee Reports
  - 9. Senate Leadership Report
  - 10. Advisors report
  - 11. New Business
  - 12. Old Business
  - 13. Adjournment
- G. A Guest Speaker must be on the posted Agenda in order to address the Senate. A Guest Speaker shall not be allowed to speak during the Old Business or New Business sections of the agenda. A guest speaker shall be limited to no more than twenty minutes of speaking time. All persons requesting time on the agenda shall be given fair and impartial consideration.
- H. The order of speakers for meetings with multiple speakers shall be determined by the Chairperson of the Senate.

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- I. Students may be allowed to address the Senate under the rules for guest speakers if adequate notice is given to the Chairperson of the Senate prior to the start of the meeting. Otherwise, students may address the Senate during the Public Forum for a maximum of three (3) minutes. Public Forum shall not exceed sixty (60) minutes.
- J. Individuals associated or affiliated with the named Guest Speaker may speak if recognized by said Guest Speaker.
- K. The Agenda shall be posted no later than Friday at 12:00 PM preceding the bi-weekly Monday Senate meeting except in cases where an emergency meeting has been called.

**SECTION 3: DEBATE AND DECORUM**

- A. Members of the Student Senate shall conduct themselves in an orderly fashion at all times while on the Senate floor. Excessive unruliness shall be defined as any premeditated or persistent distraction that disrupts the normal business of the meeting and is deemed as disorderly. The Chairperson of the Senate and the Parliamentarian of the Senate shall have the authority to decide what action is disorderly.
- B. Any Senator who has the floor shall not be interrupted by another Senator or officer for any purpose except as provided in Robert's Rules of Order or unless they consent to yield the floor to that Senator or officer.
- C. All rules of debate and decorum shall be enforced by the Parliamentarian, and transgressors of these rules shall be considered out of order.
- D. All Senators ruled out of order shall automatically lose the floor. Any Senator ruled out of order two times may be asked to leave the Senate Chambers by the Chairperson and/or Parliamentarian.
- E. Except in cases of conflict with the Rules of Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail in matters of procedure unless a suspension of the rules has been called for.
- F. A motion to suspend the rules will enable the Order of Business on the agenda to be amended with two-thirds approval of the Senate. A motion to suspend the rules can also enable the Chairperson to recognize anyone in the Senate Chambers.

**G. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

- 1. Be formed by a motion "to consider the question in the Committee of the Whole" and must pass with a two-thirds vote of the Senate.
- 2. Be a committee composed of the entire Student Senate.
- 3. Be formed when the assembly decides that a particular question can best be discussed with less formal Senate rules.
- 4. Be used to consider disciplinary matters within the Student Senate.

**H. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 1. Be called by the Chairperson of the Senate.
- 2. Be used to consider all disciplinary matters, as referenced from the courts, excluding any impeachment hearings
- 3. Follow the guidelines for executive session as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.
- 4. Only Student Government members and advisors in attendance.

**I. VOTING**

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1. Senators must be present on the Senate floor in order to vote either in person or via electronic interface.
2. Members not wishing to vote may abstain. Members wishing to abstain shall not be counted when determining the number needed to obtain a majority.
3. A tie vote is considered a lost vote unless the tie is broken by the Chairperson.
4. At the desire of any Senator present, a division of the house can be called as prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order.
5. All votes on legislation and amendments to legislation shall be taken by roll call vote unless there is an appropriate motion to suspend the rules. All other motions may be considered as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE III - LEGISLATION**

**SECTION 1: LEGISLATION CODING**

- A. All legislation brought before the Senate shall be assigned a code number by the Chief of Staff, this legislation will thereafter be referred to by the code number in all actions of measure.
- B. Each measure will receive a code determined by its type.
  1. Senate Resolutions will be designated by "SR".
  2. Simple Senate Resolutions will be designated by "SSR".
  3. Senate Bills will be designated by "SB".
  4. Constitutional Amendments will be designated by "CA".
- C. Each piece of legislation shall carry:
  1. The name or names of two (2) sponsors and one (1) or two (2) authors.
  2. A title if the sponsor or co-sponsor wished to give it one.
- D. Each piece of legislation passed by the Senate must include:
  1. The date it was first introduced by the Senate.
  2. A place for the signature of the President
  3. A place for the date on which the legislation passed the Senate.
  4. Any amendments approved by the Senate.
  5. A committee summary.
- E. A proposed agenda must be posted to the website on the Friday before the Senate Meeting; however, additions can be made to the agenda after it is posted.
- F. All legislation to be placed on the agenda must be submitted to the Senate Chairperson no later than 8:00 AM on the morning of the Senate meeting.

**SECTION 2: PATH OF LEGISLATION**

- A. FIRST READING
  1. All legislation shall have a first reading under New Business during formal meetings with a quorum present. At this time, the Chairperson of the Student Senate shall assign the legislation to the appropriate committee(s) to consider the proposed

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legislation, and the corresponding committee chair will report back to the Senate at the next formal meeting with a committee summary consisting of recommended actions.

2. The committee chair shall attach the recommendations and/or amendments to the legislation that the committee agreed upon. For clarification purposes, amendments can be made by any member of the Senate when it is called for; however, this pertains specifically to the agreed-upon amendments from the committee that deliberated on them.

**B. SECOND READING**

1. At the next formal meeting following the meeting in which legislation was first read and after the proposed legislation has received Senate attention, legislation shall have a second reading under Old Business. At this time, amendments to the legislation may be proposed and voted on.

**C. MOVE FOR ADOPTION**

1. After reading the second reading under Old Business, it may then be moved and seconded for adoption. At this time, amendments to the legislation may be proposed and voted on. All amendments must be pertinent to the legislation being considered.
2. Upon termination of debate, if the bill has not been taken from the floor, a vote shall be taken to determine passage or failure of the legislation.

**D. PASSAGE**

1. Upon passage of a piece of legislation, it shall go to the President for their approval (to be made official by their signature). If the President does not approve of the legislation, they may signify such through a veto.
2. The President must act on passed legislation within five business days. If the President does not respond in the allotted time, it will be forwarded to the applicable administrators or departments by the Student Government Advisor.

**E. EMERGENCY STATUS**

1. A piece of legislation may be granted emergency status by a two-third vote of the Student Senate or by declaration of the Chairperson of the Senate.
2. A piece of legislation successfully granted emergency status will not require a second reading.
3. A senator wishing to make a piece of legislation an emergency must give proper justification as to why the legislation needs to be made an emergency.
4. Each piece of legislation successfully granted emergency status must contain all necessary legislation coding to be immediately considered.

**F. PRESIDENTIAL VETO**

1. If the President vetoes legislation enacted by the Senate, they must affix their signature and the date of the veto in an appropriate place on the legislation.
2. The President must inform the Senate of the veto at the next formal Senate meeting, except if the legislation is vetoed after the last scheduled formal meeting of the President's term of office.

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3. If legislation is passed at the last meeting of the Senate for either semester, the President shall have until the last day of classes, as indicated by the official school calendar, to veto the legislation; otherwise, it shall be considered approved.
4. If the President vetoes legislation that was passed at the last meeting of the academic year, the Senate for the following year may not override the veto. This does not prevent the next Senate from adopting similar legislation.

**SECTION 3: SENATE BILLS**

- A. Senate Bills are required for:
  - The expenditure of money.
  - Alterations to the Constitution.
- B. An amendment to the Governing Documents shall be carried out with a Senate Bill.
- C. All bills require a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority vote of the Senate members present for passage.
- D. Senate Bills shall include a "BE IT ENACTED" clause stating the policy being established, and it may include "WHEREAS" clauses or clauses stating the reasons, conditions, or ideas as to why the bill is needed.

**SECTION 4: SENATE RESOLUTION**

- A. A Senate Resolution is a formal statement expressing the opinion, will, or intent of the Student Senate as the representative body of the students at Texas State University.
- B. A Senate Resolution is required for:
  - a. Any recommendation to another organization.
  - b. The official support of any actions that are external to Student Government.
- C. Each Senate Resolution must include:
  - a. A clear title summarizing the resolution's purpose.
  - b. A statement of intent or opinion.
  - c. Supporting background or context ("Whereas" clauses).
  - d. A resolving clause detailing the action, position, or support being expressed.
  - e. Signatures of the sponsors and any necessary co-sponsors.
  - f. Date of adoption by the Student Senate.
- D. The Senate Resolution shall include a "BE IT RESOLVED" clause stating the idea being expressed.
- E. The Resolutions require a majority vote of Student Senate members present for passage.

**F. SIMPLE SENATE RESOLUTIONS**

1. Simple Senate Resolutions should only affect students actively participating in Student Government, such as:
  - The establishment, amendment, or adoption of rules of procedure.
  - Altering the rules of debate and decorum.
  - Establishment of other guidelines concerning actions of students and senators during the academic year.
  - To express opinions or endorsements that align with the stated missions and goals of the Student Government of Texas State University.

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**ARTICLE IV - COMMITTEES WITHIN THE SENATE**

- A. Committees will be established at the beginning of each fall session of the Senate by the Chairperson of the Senate.

**SECTION 1: COMMITTEE ROLES**

**A. COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

1. Be appointed by the Chairperson of the Senate with the approval of two-thirds of the Student Senate.
2. Outline and examine the purpose of the committee concerning Student Government.
3. Give reports of the committee's findings to the Student Senate in Senate meetings.
4. Preside over their committee meetings.
5. Be responsible for the recording of all committee members' absences and minutes of the committee meetings and shall forward them to the Chief of Staff.
6. Be Student Senators.

**B. COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

1. Be appointed and removed by the Chairperson of the Senate at their discretion.
2. Attend all committee meetings.
3. Study, research, revise, and propose legislation.

**SECTION 2: GENERAL SENATE COMMITTEE PROVISIONS**

- A. Senate members may serve on no more than two standing Senate committees and two temporary ad-hoc or special committees at one time.
- B. No committee shall have the authority to amend, delete, or change in any way the nature, purpose, or content of any bill or resolution referred to it, but may draft and recommend amendments. The committee may adopt and report a complete substitution in lieu of an original bill or resolution.
- C. Committees will meet bi-weekly as determined by the Chairperson of the Senate.
- D. Committees shall have legislative review power over all legislation submitted to their committee.

**SECTION 3: NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE**

- A. The Nominations and Appointments Committee is responsible for vetting all applicants for vacant positions of Senators, Associate Justices, and Executive Department members.
- B. The Committee has no jurisdiction over the Executive Cabinet members. They are appointed at the President's discretion.
- C. The Committee must consist of 4 members who are to be confirmed by a simple majority of the Senate. The VP Pro Temp should contact the Grad House for recommendations of members for the committee, but it is not required to have a member of the House seated on the committee.
- D. The VP Pro Temp shall chair the committee and serve as the tiebreaker. The Parliamentarian shall be the Vice Chair of the Committee and may stand in for the Chair

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- if there is an emergency, illness, or additional extenuating circumstance that affects the Chair's ability to be present during the committee deliberations or interview processes.
- E. A quorum of 3 members is needed for the committee to conduct its business.
  - F. For Senate positions, the President shall forward all applicants to the committee. For Executive Departments and Judicial positions, the President may decide which applicants to nominate to the committee.
  - G. The President has a week to forward the applications to the committee. Repeated violations of this may be considered dereliction of duty.
  - H. The Committee must interview and vet the candidates and present its determination to the Senate within 2 weeks of the application.
  - I. For judicial nominees, the Chief Justice must be a part of the deliberations but will remain a non-voting member.
  - J. After a favorable finding, the Senate may confirm the nominee with a simple majority vote.
  - K. After an unfavorable finding, the Senate may confirm the nominee with a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority vote.
  - L. The Nominations and Appointments Committee should keep all applications, voting records, committee deliberation summaries, and interview scoring matrices on file and available for request. These records should be open to the public, and the VP Pro Temp should provide the requested documentation within 5 business days of the request.
  - M. The Nominations and Appointments Committee must attempt to schedule an interview with all candidates forwarded to them and cannot pass along a nomination to the Senate without an interview.
  - N. Any member of the committee must recuse themselves from participating in a hearing when, by virtue of their relationship or association with a nominee, they are unable to decide the case impartially. A motion for recusal of a specific member may be made by a member of the committee during a hearing, and upon majority vote affirming therein, will require the committee member to recuse themselves from the hearing.

**ARTICLE V - PROVISIONS**

- A. A motion may be carried to only three levels at one given time.
- B. Decisions of the Chair may be overridden by the majority vote of those Senators present.
- C. The Chairperson or acting Chairperson of the Student Senate shall at no time decide on a question involving the constitutionality of a piece of legislation or other issues of actions of the Senate.
- D. All Student Senate meetings should be open to the public. Should a sensitive matter require a closed meeting, this rule may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of those Senators present.
- E. No legislation may be amended to change the original purpose of the document.
- F. Once legislation has been considered and defeated, no legislation containing the same principle subject matter shall be considered again during the same semester it was presented. However, the original legislation may be reconsidered once.
- G. A motion to reconsider may only be made and seconded by Senators who voted on the prevailing side of the original vote. Passage of a motion to reconsider requires a majority

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vote. If the motion passes, the legislation will be reopened for debate and may be amended. Once the debate has concluded, a new vote on the legislation shall be taken.

**ARTICLE VI - ABSENCE POLICY**

**SECTION 1: SENATE ABSENCES**

- A. Three unexcused absences from Senate meetings in one session, either from general assembly or committee meetings, shall be just cause for the removal of a Senator.
- B. All absences will be recorded as excused or unexcused.
- C. All excuses shall be turned in to the Chairperson no later than 3 PM on the day of the Senate Meeting.
- D. The Chief of Staff shall keep an attendance file of all excuses for absences along with an up-to-date running attendance record. Excuses will be kept on file for a period dating back one year. This file will be open to the public for examination.
- E. Absent Senators who fail to turn in an excuse shall have their absences recorded as unexcused.
- F. The Chief of Staff should keep a running list of excused and unexcused absences. Excused absences shall include:
  - 1. Death in the Family.
  - 2. Illness.
  - 3. School-sponsored out-of-town trips.
  - 4. Other extraordinary circumstances as defined by the Chairperson of the Student Senate.
  - 5. Representing the Senate in an official capacity.
- G. When a Senator acquires two unexcused absences, they shall be warned that they have one unexcused absence before removal from office by email from the Chair of the Senate.
- H. Once a Senator acquires three unexcused absences, the Chair of the Senate shall remove the Senator from the Senate roster.
- I. Should the Chairperson record an absence as unexcused, and the Senator feels their excuse is justified, they may appeal to the Chairperson of the Student Senate to amend the decision by email, before the following senate meeting. Further appeal shall be to the Student Senate with a two-thirds vote at the following Senate meeting. The entire appeal process must take place before the next scheduled Senate meeting.
- J. Should a Senator be unable to attend meetings for several weeks running due to illness or other approved absences, they shall contact the Chairperson, who shall see that the minutes are amended on the Senator's behalf.
- K. If a Senator has more than one excused absence due to illness, a doctor's note is required for any additional absences.

**SECTION 2: TARDINESS**

- A. The Chief of Staff shall record in the minutes a tardy when a Senator arrives 10 minutes after roll call.

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- B. When a tardy Senator arrives at the Senate meeting, they shall check in with the Chief of Staff after the Senate meeting, and the absence shall be removed if qualified.
- C. If a Senator is tardy two times in one semester, it will count as one unexcused absence. If a Senator is tardy four times in one semester, it shall count as two unexcused absences.
- D. Committee Absences:
  - 1. All committee absences shall be recorded in the roll call by the Committee Chair and submitted to the Chief of Staff.
  - 2. Committee members shall turn in an excuse to the committee Chair no later than 3 PM on the day of the committee meeting.
  - 3. All excuses for committee absences shall be ruled either accepted or denied by the Chairperson of the Senate.
  - 4. After three unexcused absences from committee meetings in the same session, the Chief of Staff shall have the senator removed from the Senate.
- E. Virtual Attendance will be granted in extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Chairperson.

**ARTICLE VII – ETHICS**

- A. Senators shall be required to adhere to the Code of Ethics in all matters pertaining to Student Government and their personal conduct while occupying their respective offices. Inability to adhere to the code of ethics is grounds for removal from office.

**GRADUATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**ARTICLE I – GENERAL ORGANIZATION**

- A. All legislative powers granted to the Graduate House that exclusively relate to graduate students shall be vested in the House of Graduate Representatives (Graduate House). The Graduate House shall be responsible for recommending the construction and adoption of Rules of Procedure pertaining to the organization of the Graduate House. The Rules of Procedure shall not conflict with the provisions of the Constitution, University rules and regulations, or the Board of Regents rules and regulations.
- B. Graduate House membership and appointment of the Graduate House shall be established by and set forth in the Constitution.

**SECTION 1: OFFICERS**

**A. STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT**

- 1. Have all duties and powers granted by the Constitution, the Student Senate Rules of Procedure, and the House of Graduate Representative Rules of Procedure.

**B. HOUSE LEADER AS CHAIRPERSON**

- 1. Act as Chairperson
- 2. Have a term of office beginning June 1 and ending on May 31.
- 3. Meet with the Chairperson of all standing committees as deemed necessary.

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4. Be a Graduate Representative.
5. Be elected by the Graduate Representatives according to Article V, Section B of this Rules of Procedure.
6. Meet regularly with the President and Vice President
7. Have no vote in the Graduate House except in the event of a tie or when the vote is by paper ballot.
8. Maintain order at all times.
9. Be thoroughly versed in parliamentary procedure.
10. Not debate from the Chair except in the case of an appeal.
11. At no time decide on a question involving the constitutionality of a piece of legislation.
12. Follow the order of business as prescribed by the agenda unless the rules are suspended.
13. Remain impartial at all times while conducting meetings.
14. Make clear to all Representatives the issue in question.
15. Execute all powers and duties found in the Constitution, Student Senate Rules of Procedure, and Graduate House Rules of Procedure, consistent with the University policy and rules and regulations of the Board of Regents.
16. Appoint Internal Graduate House Committee Chairpersons with two-thirds approval of the Graduate House.
17. Remove members of any standing committees for just cause, with the approval of the Student Body President.
18. The Chairperson shall be the only person authorized to recognize people wishing to speak during a Graduate House meeting.
19. The Chairperson shall not recognize anyone except Representatives, the President, Advisor, and Ex-Officio members during old and new business sections of the agenda; the Chairperson shall recognize persons wishing to speak fairly and impartially.

**C. GRADUATE HOUSE SECRETARY**

1. Be a Graduate Representative.
2. Keep a permanent record of all Graduate House proceedings in the form of minutes, to be posted within three days after the meeting.
3. Be responsible for the printing of all Graduate House literature;
4. Keep a record of all absences and excuses.
5. Keep an accurate, up-to-date Graduate House roster.
6. Be responsible for carrying out all official correspondence for the Graduate House including sending the Graduate House Minutes to the Vice President for Student Success, the Student Success Office, the Advisor(s), the Dean of the Graduate College, the Student Body President and Vice President, House representatives and any other member of the campus community who requests a copy.
7. Be elected by the Graduate Representatives according to Article V, Section B of this Rules of Procedure.
8. Have a term of office beginning June 1 and ending on May 31.

**D. GRADUATE HOUSE PARLIAMENTARIAN**

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1. Be appointed by the Graduate House Chairperson, as needed, subject to two-thirds approval of the Graduate House.
2. Have a thorough knowledge of the Graduate House, Constitution, and Parliamentary procedures including Robert's Rules of Order.
3. Have a final say in all matters of procedural conflict on the Graduate House floor.
4. Point out serious errors in procedure to the Chairperson of the Graduate House.
5. Record all questions of order and other questions of procedure for future reference.
6. Keep time during periods of limited debate and/or speeches of debate.
7. Remove any person deemed out of order by the Chairperson or Parliamentarian.
8. Have a term of office beginning June 1 and ending on May 31.

**E. REPRESENTATIVES**

1. Installation of Representatives may be conducted at the first meeting of the new Graduate House by the newly installed President upon recommendation of the appropriate Dean.
2. Representatives shall serve a term of one or two years from their installation by the President. In the event a Representative is installed in the middle of a semester, that Representative may serve out the remainder of the semester at the end of two years.
3. A Representative shall automatically forfeit his membership in the Graduate House if they cease to be enrolled in that school which they represent, as determined by the Supreme Court.
4. Representatives shall be required to attend all Graduate House and committee meetings. The absence policy shall be strictly enforced in accordance with Article VI of this document.
5. Vacancies occurring in the Graduate House may be filled by special elections when called by the President or the Supreme Court. Otherwise, they shall be filled per the recommendation of the Dean of that specific academic college, through consultation with the House Leader, subject to approval by the Vice President and two-thirds of the House of Graduate Representatives.
6. If a seat for an academic college cannot be filled by a graduate student from that college, any graduate student may be installed as an "at large" representative.

**ARTICLE II – LEGISLATIVE AND HOUSE PROCEDURES**

**SECTION 1: DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE GRADUATE HOUSE**

- A. The House of Graduate Representatives shall legislate and make recommendations that are specifically pertinent to the welfare of graduate students while maintaining a role of representing the entire student body.
- B. May require the President to establish ad-hoc and standing committees to study problems and propose legislation and programs.
- C. The House of Graduate Representatives shall be responsible for the adoption of Rules of Procedure pertaining to the organization of the House.
- D. The House of Graduate Representatives may amend their Rules of Procedure by a two-thirds majority vote of the Representatives present and in good standing.
- E. The Senate and the House of Graduate Representatives shall have the power to amend the

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Election Code by a two-thirds majority vote of each body with Senators and Representatives present and in good standing.

- F. House of Graduate Representatives shall meet at other times called by the President of Student Government or by the Graduate House Leader if a situation arises that requires attention before the next regularly scheduled meeting.
- G. Shall have the power to override a veto by the President by a vote of two-thirds of its members.
- H. A Presidential Veto of a bill or resolution jointly authored in the House and Senate may be overridden by a concurrence vote of a two-thirds majority of all Senators and Representatives present and in good standing.
- I. The House of Graduate Representatives shall elect, by a two-thirds majority vote of all Representatives present and in good standing, a House Leader and any other officers deemed necessary by the House of Graduate Representatives for the conduct of business.
- J. Shall have the power to initiate impeachment of an officer or Representative. Conviction of impeachment shall require a two-thirds vote of the representatives present and in good standing.

**SECTION 2: GRADUATE HOUSE PROCEDURES**

- A. The Graduate House will follow the agenda set by the chairperson with a 2/3 requirement to change the agenda.
- B. The chairperson shall set the rules for debate.
- C. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised Edition will be the sole source for all questions of parliamentary procedures unless otherwise provided by the Rules of Procedure.
- D. The Graduate House shall meet at least twice every month of the Fall and Spring semesters, beginning with the second full week of regular classes. The meetings shall be called at 1:00 PM on Friday afternoons and the place shall be determined by the chairperson at the beginning of the semester. Any change in meeting time or place will require a two-thirds majority vote of the House of Graduate representatives present, or by electronic submission, and in good standing.
- E. No official business may be conducted by the Graduate House without the presence of a quorum.
- F. A quorum for the conduct of business shall be two-thirds of the membership of the Graduate House. Membership shall be determined by the total number of Representatives active on the roll at the time a meeting is called to order.
- G. Order of Business shall be determined by the agenda. The general order of business may be:
  - 1. Call to Order
  - 2. Roll Call
  - 3. Approval of Minutes
  - 4. Guest Speakers
  - 5. Public Forum
  - 6. Reports VIII. Old Business
  - 7. New Business
  - 8. Questions

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- 9. Announcements
- 10. Adjournment

**SECTION 3: DEBATE AND DECORUM**

- A. Members of the Graduate House shall always conduct themselves in an orderly fashion while on the Graduate House floor. Excessive unruliness shall be defined as any premeditated or persistent distraction, which disrupts the normal business of the meeting: and shall be considered disorderly conduct. The Chairperson of the Graduate House or the Parliamentarian of the Graduate House shall have the authority to decide what action is disorderly. All disorderly conduct shall be considered as out of order.
- B. During debate all Representatives shall confine their remarks to the subject at hand or they shall be ruled out of order.
- C. Any Representative who has the floor shall not be interrupted by another Representative for any purpose except as provided in Robert's Rules of Order or unless they consent to yield the floor to that Representative.
- D. All rules of debate and decorum shall be enforced by the Parliamentarian; transgressors of these rules shall be considered out of order.
- E. All Representatives ruled out of order shall automatically lose the floor. Any Representative ruled out of order three times may be asked to leave the Graduate House Chambers by the Chairperson.
- F. Except in the cases of conflict with the Rules of Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail unless suspension of the rules has been called for.
- G. A motion to suspend the rules will enable the Order of Business on the agenda to be amended with two thirds approval of the Graduate House. A motion to suspend the rules can also enable the Chairperson to recognize anyone in the Graduate House Chambers.

**H. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

- 1. Be formed by a motion "to consider the question in the Committee of Whole."
- 2. Be a committee composed of the entire Graduate House.
- 3. Be formed when the assembly decides that a particular question can best be discussed with the more liberal committee rules.
- 4. Be chaired by the Graduate House Leader.
- 5. Move to "rise and report" when their business is finished.
- 6. Cease to exist upon passage of this motion.
- 7. Not be recorded with minutes, but the Committee of the Whole report shall be entered into the minutes.
- 8. Be considered for addressing disciplinary matters in the Graduate House.

**I. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 1. Be called by the Chairperson.
- 2. Be used to consider disciplinary matters.
- 3. Follow the guidelines for executive session as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.
- 4. Shall be placed on the posted agenda and shall not provide grounds for the exemption from the established guidelines for placing legislation on the agenda.

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5. Be open to Faculty and Staff advisors, at their own discretion.
6. Can be called with a two-thirds majority vote of the Graduate House.

**J. VOTING**

1. Representatives must be present either on the Graduate House floor or virtually in order to vote.
2. Members not wishing to vote may abstain. Members wishing to abstain shall not be counted when determining the number needed to obtain a majority or two-thirds.
3. Undecided Representatives may pass and then cast their vote at the conclusion of voting before the final vote is announced.
4. A tie vote is considered a lost vote unless the tie is broken by the Chairperson.
5. At the desire of any Representative present, a division of the house shall be in order as prescribed in Robert's Rules of Order.
6. All votes on legislation and amendments thereto shall be taken by roll call vote unless there is a suspension of this rule. All other motions may be considered as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE III – LEGISLATION**

**SECTION 1: CODING LEGISLATION**

- A. Each measure will receive a code determined by its type.
  1. Graduate House Resolutions will be designated by "HR"
  2. Simple Graduate House Resolutions will be designated by "SHR"
  3. Graduate House Bills will be designated by "HB"
  4. Constitutional Amendments will be designated by "CA" but must be co-sponsored in the Student Senate
  5. Joint Resolutions with the Student Senate will be designated by "JR"
- B. Each piece of legislation shall carry:
  1. The name or names of sponsor(s) and the author.
  2. A title if the sponsor or co-sponsor wished to give it one.
- C. Each piece of legislation passed by the Graduate House shall carry:
  1. The date it was first introduced by the Graduate House.
  2. A place for the signature of the President and Vice President
  3. A place for the date on which the legislation passed the Graduate House.
  4. A place to indicate a committee assignment should the legislation be sent to a committee.
  5. Any amendments approved by the Graduate House.
- D. All legislation and committee report to be placed on the agenda must be submitted to the Chair of The House no later than 5:00 PM on the Tuesday preceding the Graduate House meeting. Thereafter, legislation to be placed on the agenda shall require special permission of the Chairperson of the Graduate House and shall not be accepted at all after 5:00 PM on Thursday.
- E. All legislation must be submitted to the Chairperson of the Graduate House for their signature by 5:00 on Thursday prior to the Graduate House meeting.

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**SECTION 2: PATH OF LEGISLATION**

**A. FIRST READING**

1. All legislation shall have a first reading under New Business during formal meetings with the quorum present.

**B. SECOND READING**

1. At the next formal meeting following the meeting in which legislation was first read. Legislation shall have a second reading under Old Business. At this time amendments to the legislation that are recommended by the assigned committee(s) may be proposed and voted on.

**C. DEBATE**

1. After second reading under Old Business, the Chairperson shall open the floor for debate. At this time amendments and any other legislative actions may be proposed and voted on. All amendments must be pertinent to the legislation being considered. Upon termination of debate, if the bill has not been taken from the floor, a vote shall be taken to determine passage or failure of the legislation.

**D. PASSAGE**

1. Upon passage of a piece of legislation it shall go to the President for their approval (to be made official by their signature). If the President does not approve of the legislation, they may signify such through a veto.

**E. EMERGENCY STATUS**

1. A piece of legislation may be granted emergency status by a two-thirds vote of the Graduate House or by declaration of the Chairperson of the Graduate House, in which case the legislation shall be immediately considered by the Graduate House.

**F. PRESIDENTIAL VETO**

1. The President must act on passed legislation within the period specified by the Constitution. If the President vetoes legislation enacted by the Graduate House, they must affix their signature and the date of the veto in an appropriate place on the legislation. The President must inform the Graduate House of the veto at the next formal Graduate House meeting, except if the legislation is vetoed after the last scheduled formal meeting of the President's term of office. If legislation is passed at the last meeting of the Graduate House for either semester, the President shall have until the last day of classes, as indicated by the official school calendar, to veto the legislation; otherwise, it shall be considered approved. If the President vetoes legislation that was passed at the last meeting of the academic year, the Graduate House for the following year may not override the veto. This does not prevent the next Graduate House from adopting similar legislation.

**SECTION 3: GRADUATE HOUSE BILLS**

- A. Graduate House Bills are required for:**

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1. The expenditure of money, the enactment of specific legislation within the realm of Student Government.
2. The enactment of fund-raising legislation.
- B. All bills require a majority vote of the Graduate House Representatives present for passage.
- C. The Graduate House Bill shall include a “BE IT ENACTED” clause stating the mandate being expressed and it must include “WHEREAS” clauses or clauses stating the reasons, conditions, or ideas as to why the bill is needed.

**SECTION 4: GRADUATE HOUSE RESOLUTIONS**

- A. The recommendation to another organization or the official support of any part of the ‘s actions on the record requires the passage of a Graduate House Resolution. A Graduate House Resolution is a formal statement expressed in the opinion, will, or intent of the Graduate House.
- B. The Graduate House Resolution shall include a “BE IT RESOLVED” clause stating the idea being expressed, and it must include “WHEREAS” clauses or clauses stating the reasons, conditions, or ideas as to why the resolution is needed.
- C. The Resolutions require a majority vote of Graduate House members present for passage.

**D. SIMPLE GRADUATE HOUSE RESOLUTIONS**

1. The primary purpose of a Simple Graduate House Resolution is to establish, amend, or adopt rules of procedure, rules of debate and decorum, and other guidelines concerning the action of students and Representatives on the Graduate House floor.
2. The presentation of accolades and special recognitions shall require a Simple Graduate House Resolution.
3. A majority vote is required to amend the Rules of Procedure.

**ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES WITHIN THE GRADUATE HOUSE**

- A. Committees will be established at the beginning of each academic year of the Graduate House by the House Leader of the Graduate House.

**SECTION 1: COMMITTEE ROLES**

**A. COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

1. Shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Graduate House with approval of two-thirds of the Graduate House.
2. Take attendance and minutes for the meeting.
3. Shall outline and examine the purpose of the committee in relation to Student Government.
4. Shall determine the time, place, and frequency of meetings and notify members according to guidelines established by the Chairperson of the Graduate House.
5. Shall give periodic reports of the committee’s findings to the Graduate House according to deadlines established by the Chairperson of the Graduate House.

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6. Shall preside over all committee meetings.
7. Shall be responsible for the recording of all committee member's absences and minutes of the committee meetings and shall forward them to the Graduate House Secretary.
8. Shall be a Graduate Representative.
9. The Committee Chairperson shall meet with the Chairperson of the Graduate House and Graduate House Leader as deemed necessary by the Chairperson of the Graduate House.
10. The Committee Chairperson may appoint a co-chairperson with two-thirds approval of the committee.

**B. COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRPERSON**

1. Preside at meetings when the Chairperson is absent.
2. Assist the Chairperson.
3. Keep record of attendance of members.
4. Maintain a record of excuses for absences by committee members.
5. Take attendance and minutes for the meeting if chair is not present.
6. Keep the Chairperson informed of attendance violations.
7. Enforce absence policy as outlined in Article VI of this document.

**C. COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

1. Be appointed by the Graduate House Chairperson.
2. Be removed by the Chairperson of the House at their option.
3. Attend all committee meetings scheduled by the Committee Chairperson.
4. Study, research, revise, and propose legislation.

**SECTION 2: GENERAL GRADUATE HOUSE COMMITTEE PROVISIONS**

- A. Graduate House Representatives may serve on no more than three standing Graduate House committees and two temporary ad-hoc or special committees at one time.
- B. No committee shall have the authority to amend, delete, or change in any way the nature, purpose, or content of any bill or resolution referred to it, but may draft and recommend amendments thereto. The committee may adopt and report a complete committee substitution in lieu of an original bill or resolution.
- C. Committees will meet every week or on a regular basis as determined by the Chairperson.
- D. Committees shall have legislative review power all legislation submitted to their committee.

**E. GENERAL SUBCOMMITTEE PROVISIONS**

1. The Graduate House Committee Chairperson may form subcommittees to address special project and issues that are being undertaken by their respective Graduate House Committees.
2. Graduate House subcommittees may contain persons who are not members of the House upon approval of the Graduate House Chairperson.
3. Each Graduate House subcommittee non-Graduate House member shall be allowed to

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fully participate in the discussion within the subcommittee, and shall attend all meetings, and shall act in an advisory capacity.

4. Graduate House subcommittee non-Graduate House members shall not have an official vote on the subcommittee.

**SECTION 3: SPECIAL, SELECT, AND AD-HOC GRADUATE HOUSE COMMITTEES**

- A. Shall be created by the President or may be created by a motion or legislation when the need arises for a committee of a temporary nature.
- B. All special committee members shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Graduate House with two-thirds approval of the Graduate House.
- C. The appointed committee members will elect a Chairperson from among the special committee to preside during the time of the committee's existence.
- D. Will be dissolved as soon as the Chairperson of the Graduate House and the Chairperson of the committee feel the project(s) is completed, or by legislation or motion.

**ARTICLE V – PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 1: GENERAL**

- A. A motion may be carried to only three levels at one given time.
- B. Decisions of the Chairperson may be overridden by the majority vote of those Representatives present.
- C. The Chairperson or acting Chairperson of the Graduate House shall at no time decide on a question involving the constitutionality of a piece of legislation or other issues of actions of the Graduate House.
- D. All Graduate House meetings shall be open to the public. Should a sensitive matter require a closed meeting, this rule may be suspended by the Chair of the House or a two-thirds vote of those Representatives present.
- E. No legislation may be amended so as to change the original purpose.
- F. Once legislation has been considered and defeated no legislation containing the same principle subject matter shall be considered again during the same semester it was presented. However, the original legislation may be reconsidered once.
- G. A motion to reconsider may be made and seconded only by Representatives who vote on the prevailing side in the original vote. A motion to reconsider is debatable if the item to be reconsidered is debatable. A motion to reconsider requires a majority vote for passage. Upon passage of a motion to reconsider, the legislation may be debated and amended. Upon termination of debate on the legislation, a new vote shall be taken.

**SECTION 2: ELECTIONS WITHIN THE GRADUATE HOUSE**

**A. GENERAL ELECTION GUIDELINES**

1. Elections will be held at the last meeting of the Spring semester to select a new Graduate House Leader.
2. During this election, other members of the grad house may be elected; however, any positions that remain open shall be filled during the Fall election, which is to be held

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at either the first or second convening of the Grad House in the Fall semester.

3. In the event of vacated seats after both elections, the Grad House Leader shall have the power to call a special election to fill any vacant seats.
4. All elections shall be presided over by the Chairperson of the Graduate House unless the Chairperson is a candidate, whereby any Representative who is not a candidate shall preside over the election.
5. The Chairperson shall be aided by those Representatives they select who are not candidates.
6. All special elections shall be based on a roll call.
7. Winners shall be determined by a plurality vote.
8. All introductions, speeches, questions, and discussions shall immediately precede balloting, should they be called for by the Chairperson.
9. In the event of a tie, the votes will be resubmitted until a candidate is selected.

**B. SPECIAL ELECTION GUIDELINES**

1. Special elections shall be elections which fill vacancies for Graduate House Officers.
2. Special elections shall be held at the first Graduate House meeting in which one of the positions needs to be filled.
3. The procedure for holding a special election shall be the same as for general Graduate House elections.
4. Winners of Graduate House Officer special elections shall immediately assume the position for the duration of the term.

**ARTICLE VI – ABSENCE POLICY**

**SECTION 1: GRADUATE HOUSE ABSENCES**

- A. Three unexcused absences from Graduate House meetings in one semester (formal or committee) shall be just cause for removal of a Representative.
- B. All absences will be recorded as excused or unexcused.
- C. All excuses shall be turned into the House Leader no later than 5 PM Tuesday following the meeting missed.
- D. The Graduate House Secretary shall keep an attendance file of all excuses along with an up-to-date running attendance account. Excuses will be kept on file for a period dating back one year. This file will be open to the public for examination.
- E. Absent Representatives who fail to turn in an excuse shall be recorded as unexcused.
- F. The Graduate House Leader shall keep a running list of excused absences taken that the absence is based on the following guidelines:
  1. Death in the Family.
  2. Illness.
  3. School sponsored out-of-town trips.
  4. Other extraordinary circumstances as defined by the House Leader of the House of Graduate Representatives.
- G. When a Representative acquires two unexcused absences, he or she shall be warned by a phone call or email from the Graduate House Leader that he or she has two unexcused absences before removal from office.

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- H. Once a Representative acquires three unexcused absences, the Graduate House Chairperson shall remove the representative.
- I. Should the Graduate House Chairperson record an absence as unexcused, and the Representative feel their excuse is justified, they may appeal to the Graduate House to amend the minutes. Any appeal shall be to the Graduate House with a two-thirds vote.
- J. Should a Representative be unable to attend meetings for several weeks running due to illness or other approved absences, they shall contact the Graduate House Chairperson, who shall see that the minutes are amended on the Representative's behalf. Upon returning, the Representative must turn in a written excuse for the attendance file.

**SECTION 2: GRADUATE HOUSE COMMITTEE ABSENCES**

- A. All committee absences shall be recorded in the minutes by the Committee Chairperson.
- B. Committee members shall turn in written excuses to the Committee Chairperson no later than one week after the meeting missed. Excuses may be left with the Graduate House Secretary who will place the date received on the excuse.
- C. All excuses for committee absences shall be ruled either accepted or denied by the Committee Chairperson. Committee members may appeal the decision of the Committee Chairperson to the Graduate House. The Graduate House may override the decision of the Committee Chairperson by a two-thirds vote.
- D. After three unexcused absences from committee meetings in the same semester, the Committee Chairperson shall request that the Chairperson of the Graduate House remove the representative.

**SECTION 3: GRADUATE HOUSE REMOVAL**

- A. Officers of the Graduate House may be removed by a two-thirds vote, failure to meet qualification as outlined in the Constitution and Graduate House Rules of Procedure, failure to fulfill the duties described therein, and failure to support the Constitution. When removal of an officer is pending, that officer shall have no vote during relevant proceedings but shall retain speaking privileges.
- B. Representatives may be removed by a two-thirds vote for failure to meet qualifications as outlined in the Constitution and the Graduate House Rules of Procedure.
- C. Should the Chairperson of the Graduate House be impeached, they shall relinquish the Chair to the Graduate House Leader until all impeachment proceedings are completed.
- D. Should a Representative be impeached, they shall have no voice until all impeachment proceedings are completed.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT TERM LIMITS**

**ARTICLE I – EXECUTIVE**

**SECTION 1: PRESIDENT**

- A. The President will be limited to a 1-year term limit.
- B. The President cannot run for reelection.

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- C. The President may run for election of another office.

**SECTION 2: VICE PRESIDENT**

- A. The Vice President will be limited to a 1-year term limit.
- B. The Vice President cannot run for reelection.
- C. The Vice President may run for election of another office.

**ARTICLE II – LEGISLATIVE**

**SECTION 1: SENATORS**

- A. Senators serve 1-year terms and can serve no more than 4 terms.

**ARTICLE III – JUDICIAL**

**SECTION 1: CHIEF JUSTICE**

- A. Chief Justice may serve a maximum of 4 terms. They are to be reelected by an internal vote of the Court every year.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTION CODE**

**ARTICLE I – PREAMBLE**

The purpose of this document is to establish rules and procedures that govern all matters regarding the Student Government elections.

**ARTICLE II – DEFINITIONS**

“**ADVISORY OPINION**” refers to any opinion issued by the Supreme Court concerning any matter affecting the campus-wide elections that may not be included within the language of the election code but will be considered binding as an opinion of the Supreme Court and extension of this code, which will be published primarily in the Operating Memorandum.

“**BRIBERY**” refers to when a candidate, agent, or worker offers an exchange of anything of value, in return for a guarantee of a vote.

“**CAMPAIGN MANAGER**” refers to a person designated by a candidate to manage their campaign. The campaign manager is the only person officially associated with a candidate.

“**CAMPAIGN**” and “**CAMPAIGNING**” refer to statements, literature, activities, or deliberate uses or distribution of materials of any kind, including electronic or virtual, that have or are intended to have the effect of soliciting votes, support, or interest for a candidate. Campaigning must only occur during the official campaign period, as defined in this code.

“**CAMPAIGN MATERIALS**” refers to all materials and literature of any kind, including electronic or virtual, concerning any candidate that has or is intended to have the effect of

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soliciting votes, support, or interest for a candidate.

**“CANDIDATE”** refers to any student running for office.

**“CANDIDATE-ELECT”** refers to a candidate who has won their respective election but who has not yet been sworn-in yet.

**“DAY”** is one 24-hour period. A day includes weekdays, Saturday, and Sunday.

- A. **“BUSINESS DAY”** is one 24-hour period, a non-weekend day, during a normal operating day for the university.
- B. **“CLASS DAY”** is one 24-hour period, non-weekend day, during a normal operating scheduled class day for the university.

**“DONATIONS”** refers to any monetary or non-monetary form of assistance provided to the candidate and their campaign. All donations must have a tangible value amount (IE., A donated photoshoot would be equivalent to either the photographer's usual rate or the average cost of a photo session). All donations must be documented and included in the candidate's financial disclosure form.

**ELECTIONS, TYPES**

- A. **“GENERAL ELECTION”** refers to the annual election of Student Government officers, as specified in the Student Government Constitution.
- B. **“SPECIAL ELECTION”** refers to an election called by the Student Government President or Senate as specified in the Student Government Constitution.

**“ENDORSEMENT”** and **“ENDORISING”** refers to any form of communication expressing support for a candidate. Reposts on a social media platform constitute an endorsement. Social media follows or “likes,” and equivalents do not constitute endorsements.

**“ENDORSERS”** refers to any

**“EXECUTIVE TICKET”** refers to a collaborative campaign between a Presidential candidate and a Vice-Presidential candidate. Candidates for President and Vice President must run as a ticket and must be elected together.

**“EXPLORATORY PERIOD”** refers to the period of time that potential candidates may privately consult and recruit for the formation of an Alliance.

**“REGULATORY BODIES”** include the Supreme Court and all other administrative bodies of the election process.

**“RULING, OPINION, AND DECISION”** refer to any decision or judgment issued by the Supreme Court resulting from a hearing rectifying a violation of this code or clarifying the interpretation of a rule.

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**“STUDENT”** refers to any individual whose name appears on the current roster of the Registrar of the university.

**“TIME”** all references to time of day are in Central Time Zone (CT).

**“UNIVERSITY RESOURCES”** refers to any asset located on or off Texas State University property that is under the control of the university and is not accessible to all students.

**“VOTER FRAUD”** is the illegal interference with the process of an election and includes, but is not limited to, increasing the vote share of a favored candidate, depressing the vote share of a rival candidate, or both and is determined by the Supreme Court.

**“WEEK”** is defined as seven constitutive calendar days.

### **ARTICLE III – ELIGIBILITY**

- A. All candidates must be deemed eligible in accordance with the Student Government Constitution by the Dean of Students Office and the Supreme Court.
- B. Only students on the current semester's official roll of the Office of the Registrar may actively seek office or vote in campus-wide elections.
- C. To be considered an official candidate for an office, the filer must meet all of the following requirements:
  - 1. Be certified through the Registrar by a Student Government Advisor.
  - 2. Sign a release form that states that the candidate has read and understood the rules and regulations of the Election Code. Candidates may be exempted from this signature, provided the Supreme Court has an alternative method of informing or educating candidates of rules and regulations, as well as validating their agreement to abide by them.
- D. The Supreme Court shall work with Student Success Technology to verify the election ballot and referendum 2 days before the first day of elections.

### **ARTICLE IV – PROVISIONS**

- A. The Supreme Court governs over all elections.
- B. The Supreme Court shall comply with all requirements stated in all Student Government governing documents. If a situation arises not explicitly provided for in the governing documents, the Supreme Court shall determine its validity. The Supreme Court shall have the power to enforce any and all of the provisions in this document by any disciplinary action as outlined in the violations section of this Code.

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- C. The Supreme Court must publish an operating memorandum outlining the expected processes and procedures, violation classifications, dates, interpretations, and advisory opinions for the coming election at least five business days before the Supreme Court's first Rules Reading Seminar
- D. Student Government, as a student organization, shall not endorse or support any campaign for office, but may promote voting days and election events in a non-biased manner, and the President may allocate funds for the non-biased promotion of said events.
- E. The provisions of this Code are applicable to all Student Government elections and student referendums.
- F. All persons participating in campus-wide elections agree to comply with this code, Student Government Constitution, S.G.C., university policies, and local, state, and federal laws.
- G. The Supreme Court has the power to regulate, administer, and take other actions that are expressly authorized or implied in this Code to provide direction and oversight of election-related issues that are not directly codified herein.
- H. Ignorance of the Election Code will not be an acceptable defense in response to any offense committed in any election under this code, either by the candidates themselves, their agents or workers, or the election regulatory bodies, as defined by this code.

**ARTICLE V – ELECTION TIMEFRAME**

- A. Filing for the Spring General Election shall begin on the first-class day of the spring semester and end on the last-class day of February at 5:00 p.m.
- B. The Exploratory Period shall begin on the same day that filing opens. This period may be utilized to prepare campaign materials and ask for monetary donations in private. During this timeframe, candidates may privately seek out running mates and campaign managers. This must involve private communication and cannot be public. All private communication regarding the exploratory period must have a direct intent to either recruit members of the campaign team, obtain donations, or receive the promise of a future endorsement.
- C. When reaching out to individuals about endorsements during the exploratory period, the request can be made of an individual organization officer but cannot be publicized to members of the organization until the campaigning period. If the organization requires a vote of its general members on the endorsement, then it will have to wait until the designated campaigning period.
- D. Intentional misuse of this provision that reflects an intent to campaign can result in a Class A violation.

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- E. Campaigning for the Spring General Election shall begin on the first Monday after Spring Break and conclude at the end of the Voting Period.
- F. The Voting Period for the Spring General Election shall begin at 8:00 a.m. on the second Thursday after Spring Break and end at 11:59 p.m. on the next day.
- G. Election results will not be certified until all pending election related court cases are settled.

**ARTICLE VI – CAMPAIGNING PUBLICITY REGULATIONS**

- A. All publicity materials must be removed within a week of the final day of the election. Each candidate shall be responsible for the removal and disposal of all campaign paraphernalia bearing their name within two days after the election.
- B. Vandalism of any campaign materials, including the removal or alteration of any material owned by a candidate, shall constitute vandalism.

**ARTICLE VII – CAMPAIGNING REGULATIONS**

- A. No one shall campaign within twenty-five (25) feet of any academic building or residence hall during elections. The two exceptions to this section are whether you are invited by a registered student organization into a meeting or are posting physical or digital flyers that have been approved by the proper channels. Under no circumstances may you inhibit the learning environment by campaigning during a class or lab. Hall councils may invite candidates to speak to them at the residence hall in a meeting space under no circumstances may a candidate interfere with the residence hall environment.
- B. No candidate may utilize any facilities, equipment, or services that receive university funding and are not available to the general student body for use during campaigning.
- C. Public, printed, electronic, verbal, or any other display of campaigning shall be prohibited until the campaigning period.
- D. Candidates may not offer or facilitate incentives for voting in the Student Government election, including but not limited to point systems, monetary rewards, or service hours. Candidates can be held responsible if a Student Organization they are affiliated with or endorsed by incentivizes voting in the election.

**ARTICLE VIII – CAMPAIGN SPENDING**

- A. No campaign may use any funds, directly or indirectly, from the university on campaigning. This clause excludes paychecks distributed by the University to an

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- individual worker.
- B. Each Executive ticket may spend no more than \$1000.00 on its campaign. Senatorial and Representative candidates may spend no more than \$500.00 on their respective campaigns.
  - C. A single donation to a candidate or Executive ticket may not exceed \$250.00. If a candidate is to seek out a donation from an individual or a business, that person may make a one-time donation valued at \$250.00 or multiple donations throughout the campaign that cannot exceed \$250.00 when combined.
  - D. All candidates for President, Vice President, House, and Senate shall submit to the Supreme Court a report containing their total campaigning expenditures verified by receipts or bank records within 72 hours of the posting of election results. The cost of any donated items must be included in calculations of total campaign expenditures. This shall include discounts not available to the general public and all donations that the candidate has received. Candidates may not receive any donations from university funds; this does not include paychecks.

**ARTICLE IX – PUNISHMENTS**

- A. Class A offenses shall be considered the most egregious form of violation to this Election Code, Class B offenses shall be considered moderate violations of this Election Code, and Class C offenses shall be considered minor violations of this Election Code.
- B. Class A offenses shall be defined as violations that undermine the integrity of Student Government elections. This shall include, but is not limited to bribery, voter intimidation, forged financial statements, monetary violations, early campaigning, ethical violations, and illegally campaigning in academic or residential halls. The Supreme Court may designate other violations of a similar magnitude as class A violations.
- C. Class B offenses shall be defined as major violations of the election code. This shall include, but is not limited to, vandalism and defamatory statements. The Supreme Court may designate other violations of a similar magnitude as class B violations.
- D. Class C offenses shall be defined as minor or unintentional infractions of the election code. This shall include but is not limited to lack of approval of signs from Student Involvement and Engagement and not removing campaign paraphernalia after the election ends. The Supreme Court may designate other violations of a similar magnitude as class C violations.
- E. Punishment for Class A offenses shall range from a 72-hour suspension up to a complete disqualification from the election. The court may determine the appropriate punishment on a case-by-case basis. Disqualification should be reserved for extremely egregious violations that undermined the fairness of the election.
- F. Punishment for Class B violations shall range from a 24-hour suspension up to a 72-hour

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suspension. The court may determine the appropriate punishment on a case-by-case basis.

- G. Punishment for Class C infractions shall range from a written warning up to a 24-hour suspension. The court may determine the appropriate punishment on a case-by-case basis.
- H. If the court is notified of a violation that challenges the integrity or fairness of the election after the election period has ended, the Court has two remedial options available to it. If the court is made aware of and reaches a guilty verdict on the violation prior to the swearing in of the candidate, they will be disqualified from the election. If the court is made aware of and reaches a guilty verdict after the swearing in of the candidate, they will refer the case to the Senate for an impeachment trial.
- I. Any candidate who is disqualified by the Supreme Court is barred from any future Student Government election.
- J. Candidates are responsible for the actions and conduct of individuals officially associated with their campaign. Additionally, candidates may be held accountable for the behavior of individuals not officially associated with their campaign, determined on a case-by-case basis.
- K. All Supreme Court decisions are final. However, in the case of decisions about the election results or disqualification, a candidate may appeal the court's decision to the appropriate University authorities. Supreme Court decisions regarding election results or disqualification may only be overturned in the case of egregious misapplication of the code.
- L. Anyone may file a complaint or request for interpretation of this Election Code by contacting the Texas State University Supreme Court.

**ARTICLE X – POLLING PLACES**

- A. The individual method and location of polling places shall be decided prior to the beginning of the filing period, with coordination between the Executive and Judicial Branch, with Advisor input. They should also loop in the proper University authorities.

**ARTICLE XI – ELECTIONS**

- A. All Texas State Students are eligible to vote.
- B. The Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates who win a simple majority of the total votes cast shall acquire the position. Senators and Representatives shall be elected by a plurality vote, with a minimum of fifty votes to qualify.
- C. All candidates who were elected for a spot in the Student Government shall be notified by email from the Supreme Court within 48 hours of results being posted.

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**ARTICLE XII – PROTESTS**

- A. Any person protesting the results of the election must send their protest to the Supreme Court within two weeks of the election results. This deadline can be waived by the Court if egregious evidence is discovered at a later date. If this occurs after the swearing in of the candidate, it will be referred to the Senate for an impeachment trial.
- B. After the Supreme Court rules, either party may within two business days, submit a written appeal to the proper University authorities.
- C. Any person contesting the election on the grounds of electronic media must file with the Student Success Office written notice immediately. If the Student Success Office, in conjunction with Student Success Information Technology, determines the protest is valid, then remedy shall be offered by the extension of voting beyond the voting deadline of the amount of time during the electronic complication. Other remedies can be agreed upon by the contestant and the Student Success Office during this review.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT CODE OF ETHICS**

**PREAMBLE**

As members of the Texas State University's Student Government, we represent the Student Government and Texas State at all times and in all places. Understanding our duty, both constitutionally and ethically, we recognize that the rules set forth by our governing documents are not enough. Our ethical expectations must be made as clear as our institutional ones. All members of the Student Government have a responsibility to the students of Texas State and should be held to a higher standard as examples of our leadership on campus. We are all accountable to the student public at Texas State.

Therefore, we establish this Student Government Code of Ethics to provide for a standard by which to follow under all circumstances whatsoever.

**ARTICLE I**

- A. Elected officials should consider it their responsibility to gather and heed the advice and consent of their constituents. However, the right of an elected official to represent their constituents in whatever way and in whatever manner they dictate is a right reserved to the elected official.
- B. All members of Student Government shall be considered members at all times and in all places and shall be subject to its rules and to proper punishment should a violation of those rules occur.

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- C. All members of Student Government are bound to this document to act ethically and non-discriminatory to any person(s) on or off campus and not engage in any form of libel or slander based on race, sex, economic class, social standing, sexuality, or private affiliation upon their confirmation as a member.

**ARTICLE II – THE LEGISLATURE**

- A. At all times and in all places, members of the Senate and House shall treat their fellow members with all respect due to both themselves personally and the office they hold. This consideration is also extended to the members of the Executive and Judicial branches.
- B. The Legislature of the Student Government shall under no circumstances whatsoever endorse political candidates for any elected office; this prohibition shall not extend to the individual members themselves. All other endorsements shall speak only for the specific chamber of the Legislature and not of the Student Body as a whole. Therefore, all such endorsements shall be simple resolutions by the Senate or House and do not presume to speak for the entire student body.

**ARTICLE III - THE EXECUTIVE**

- A. While respecting the right of the individual to express their personal preferences as to the political representation, under no circumstances whatsoever shall the elected members of the Executive Branch make public endorsements for any political candidates in an official capacity or through official Student Government messaging.
- B. The Executive branch shall be expected to make themselves available to the student body and always maintain an open-door policy.
- C. The Executive branch shall work with all other branches but should never infringe or interfere with the powers vested in the other branches. The Executive shall not engage in unnecessary entanglements with other branches, and the Supreme Court shall respect the separation of powers established in the Constitution.

**ARTICLE IV – THE JUDICIARY**

- A. Respecting the separation of powers guaranteed by our system of government, at no time will the judiciary attempt to legislate from the bench or act contrary to any governing document.
- B. No member of the Judiciary shall express, in their official capacity, their personal preferences as to the political representation, and under no circumstances whatsoever shall members of the Judiciary make a public endorsement for any candidate running for any office unless they themselves are running for office.

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- C. No member of the Judiciary shall express support for an SG candidate in any circumstances whatsoever.
- D. At no time will a member of the judiciary prejudge a case that is pending before them or discuss said case with anyone outside of formal meetings and conferences of the court until a decision is rendered and published.

**OATH AND AFFIRMATION**

**OATH OF OFFICE.** As prescribed in the Student Government Constitution, every elected and appointed member of the Student Government will swear an oath to the principles stated within this Code of Ethics, the laws of Student Government, and the Student Government Constitution.

The oath will read;

“I, [NAME], do hereby swear that I, in my capacity as [OFFICE], will represent the students to the utmost of my ability and will discharge the duties of my office with integrity and honesty. I further state that I will support and uphold the Student Government Constitution and the laws of the Student Government of Texas State University and will strive to promote Student Government throughout the campus community.”