

Texas State University Student Government Supreme Court

Advisory Opinion

Requirements for Guest Speakers

**Opinion No: 25-17
Syllabus**

Request Received -

The supreme court received a request to advise on what constitutes a department vs a cabinet position.

For this question we hold that:

- 1- Anyone maybe a guest speaker at a Student Government meeting, as long as their invitation – or they as individuals – do not break any ethical clauses of Student Government.

A detailed explanation of our decision is found in the opinion below.

Associate Justice Downey delivered the majority opinion of the court in which justices Hanzala, Nguyen, Karki, and Hernandez joined.

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Associate Justice Downey delivered the majority opinion of the court.

We received a request from Leader Soomro to clarify whether the Graduate House is allowed to have Congressional Candidates as guest speakers or as speakers from the public during the public forum.

The code does not explicitly state that there is a formal set of restrictions on who can constitute as a guest speaker, thus it is the unanimous opinion of the court that if the Graduate House formally invites the individual, then that constitutes as a guest speaker.

Within the legislative body there are two main ways in which non-members can come to speak during Senate meetings. This is through public forums or invited guest speakers. The question before us pertains to the requirements regarding these avenues of speaking, and if an individual may come as a guest speaker if they have a political background.

The court views the public forum as an essential part of Student Government as it allows members of the public to actively engage with our elected student leaders. Public forum is open to any member of the public that wishes to speak as stated in Article 1 Section 1 Subsection B – 14.

“In a fair and impartial manner, allow the public to speak during public forum.”

Regarding Guest Speakers, it is the duty of members of Student Government to make our ethical expectations as clear as possible as stated in the Preamble of the Student Government Code of Ethics.

“... Our ethical expectations must be made as clear as our institutional ones.”

It is the opinion of the court that this is achieved through ensuring that not only our members abide by the code of ethics, but also those that are invited to speak as guest speakers.

Thus, any individual or group that wishes to be invited as a guest speaker may be allowed to speak so long as the previously mentioned ethical standards are met.

Lastly, while political candidates are allowed to speak in no circumstance, may their presence be used to endorse a political candidate. As stated under Article II Section B of the Student Government Code of Laws.

“The Legislature of the Student Government shall under no circumstances whatsoever endorse political candidates for any elected office”

It is so ordered . . .