

The Bylaws of the Student Government Association Senate of the University of Memphis

Revised and Updated Fall 2026

ARTICLE I: POWERS AND DUTIES

Section 1: Powers of the Senate

- A. The Senate shall have the power to establish permanent and temporary as needed. Membership of these committees shall consist of undergraduate students.
- B. The Senate shall have the power to confirm all Cabinet appointments subject to the voting restrictions expressed in Article IV, Section XI, Subsection C of the Student Government Association Constitution.
- C. The Senate shall have the power to confirm all appointments to the Senate subject to the voting restrictions expressed in Article IV Section III of the Student Government Association Constitution.
- D. The Senate shall have the power to override a Presidential veto with a (2/3) vote of members present subject to such restrictions as expressed in Article IV Section XI, subsection D of the Student Government Association Constitution.

Section 2: Duties of the Senate

- A. The Senate shall have the duty to vote on impeachment of any Executive Officer, Senator, or Justice of the Student Government Association who is failing to perform adequately.
- B. By the first (1st) regular meeting, the Senate shall elect from its members a Speaker.
 - I. The Senate may remove the Speaker by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present during any regularly scheduled Senate meeting.
- C. By the second [2nd] regular meeting, the Senate shall conduct a vote by secret ballot on the committee chair recommendations presented by the Speaker on an individual basis.
 - †. The chairpersons of each committee shall be voted upon in each individual committee.
 - ‡. The members of the cabinet shall serve as the point of contact for the respective committees.

- III. If a member is not approved, the Speaker shall present recommendations for the vacant chairs at the third regular meeting, and the voting procedure outlined above shall apply.
 - IV. If the recommendations for the vacant chair are not approved, the Speaker shall take recommendations from the floor, and the previously outlined voting procedures shall continue until all vacant chairs are filled.
- D. By the second (2nd) regular meeting, the Senate shall confirm the Speaker of the Senate's appointment of a Chief Clerk by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present.
 - I. The Senate may remove the Chief Clerk by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present during any regularly scheduled Senate meeting.
- E. All committee chairs must be filled by the third meeting.
- F. Senators must commit three(3) office hours per week in the University Center or represent the Student Government Association at a Registered Student Organization's (RSO) event.
- G. All senators must participate in one of the following activities per week during the regularly scheduled academic school year each semester.
 - I. Senators may write a bill or resolution.
 - II. Senators may participate in an activity that the Executive Council has chosen to use as a replacement for the normal weekly requirement.
 - i. The weekly activity should be deemed an appropriate event by the majority of the Executive Council and presented by the Speaker of the Senate at Senate Meetings or Committee Chair at Committee Meetings, for their respective week.
 - III. Senators may meet with University administrators or faculty on behalf of the Student Government Association.
- H. A breach of any duty listed or incorporated into these By-Laws is just grounds for disciplinary action such as reprimand, censure, or impeachment.
 - I. Any senator breaching these duties listed in Section H shall be available for review and discussion with any executive council members immediately upon failure to uphold these duties after three times.

ARTICLE II: SENATE MEMBERSHIP AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Section 1: Apportionment and Membership

- A. The quantity and apportionment of senate seats shall be made in accordance with the SGA constitution, Article IV, Section IV.
- B. “Student Senate membership” shall be defined as the total number of Senators in office at that time.
- C. All students, regardless of topic, are welcome to attend and join

Section 2: Qualifications for Office

- A. Each Senator shall maintain their status as an active student throughout their term as senator. If a senator fails to maintain their status as such, they shall be expelled and their seat shall be classified as vacant.
 - a. An active student shall be defined as any student who is enrolled in six (6) or more semester hours and has paid the appropriate Student Activity Fee.
- B. At the time of their election or appointment and throughout their tenure, a Senator shall maintain a per-semester GPA of 2.5 on a four-point (4.0) scale.
- C. Speaker of the Senate shall be required at the time of their election, and throughout their term, to have a cumulative GPA of not less than 3.00 on a four-point (4.0) scale.
- D. Law students shall be required to have a sixty-five (65) average.
- E. All Senators, including the Speaker of the Senate must be in good standing with the University and retain said status to hold office.

Section 3: Senator Attendance and Bill Submission

- A. Senators shall miss no more than three (3) formal or committee meetings.
- B. Senators are allowed up to 3 excused or unexcused absences a semester.
- C. Senators must complete 3 office hours a week.
- D. Senators have up to 3 weeks of failed office hours; 3 excused absences, or 3 unexcused absences per semester are allowed; exceeding these limits will result in automatic removal.
- E. Each Senator shall be notified by the Chief Clerk after their second absence during

a semester from a regularly scheduled Senate meeting.

- F. Senate meetings shall be defined as the time between the first roll call and adjournment of the meeting. Each Senator has a ten (10) minute grace period to declare their/his presence without penalty.
- G. Senators have the responsibility of informing the Chief Clerk in written form of their late arrival or early leave within the ten-minute grace period.
- H. Each Senator shall be responsible for turning in all legislation to the Speaker of the Senate by the appropriate deadline as outlined by the Senate Rules Manual.

Section 4: Resignation of Senators

- A. The resignation of a Senator from their seat shall only be considered official if written notice is given to the Legislative Council.
- B. Resignation of a committee chairmanship or position of Chief Clerk shall be considered official resignation from that position, but not of the actual Senate seat. It shall then be the duty of the Speaker of the Senate to undertake the appropriate action to fill such position in a reasonable manner of time.
 - a. Appropriate action shall be defined as
 - b. Reasonable manner of time shall be defined as
- C. Any Senate seat designated as vacant by these By-Laws shall be filled in a manner designated in Article IV, Section III of the Student Government Association Constitution.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS OF THE SENATE

Section 1: Speaker of the Senate

The Speaker of the Senate shall have the following powers and duties:

- A. All powers and duties defined in Article VI, Section VII of the Student Government Association Constitution.
- B. The power to bring an appeal of a Senator's expulsion before the Senate.
- C. The duty to preserve order and decorum at all Senate meetings.
- D. The duty to recommend committee chairs and appoint students to Senate Committees during regularly scheduled Senate meetings.
- E. The power to require any motion to be reduced to writing and submitted to the Clerk.

- F. The duty to report on any or no action by the President upon all Bills and Resolutions passed by the Senate.
- G. The duty to submit to the President all Bills and Resolutions passed by the Senate within four (4) business days after passage.
- H. The duty to report immediately an acceptance of an appeal for the reinstatement of an expelled Senator to the President.
- I. The duty of collating the Senate Journal of the most recent General Assembly before relinquishing their office to their successor. The contents of this journal shall be updated within two weeks of Senate passage.
- J. The duty of appointing a Chief Clerk by the third (3rd) regular Senate meeting of the current General Assembly.

Section 2: Senate Chief Clerk

The Clerk of the Senate shall have the following duties:

- A. Be present at all Student Senate meetings.
- B. Be responsible for the accurate recording of the minutes of all regular and special meetings of the Student Senate.
- C. The Clerk shall be responsible for posting the following to the SGA website no later than one (1) week after each Senate meeting:
 - I. The minutes of each Senate meeting
 - II. The agenda for each Senate meeting
 - III. The bills for each Senate meeting
 - IV. The attendance and voting record of every Senator for each Senate meeting.
- D. Be responsible for the typing of all minutes within one week.
- E. Be appointed by the Speaker of the Senate.
- F. Update any changes or amendments to the by-laws upon passage of the Senate.
- G. Update any change or amendments to the constitution upon ratification of the student body.

Section 3: Senate Committee Chairpersons

The Senate Committee Chairpersons shall have the following duties:

- A. To preside over their respective Standing Committee
- B. Schedule at least two committee meetings per month during each full month of the regular school term.

ARTICLE IV: STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1: Powers and Duties of Senate Committees.

The Senate committees of the Senate shall be as follows and have the following powers and duties:

- A. Legislative Council
 - I. This committee shall be composed of all chairpersons of the Senate committees.
 - II. The Speaker shall serve as chair.
 - III. The Legislative Council shall meet thirty (30) minutes prior to each Senate meeting when necessary to conduct its business.
 - IV. Special sessions of Legislative Council may be called by either the Speaker of the Senate or the Chief Clerk as needed.
 - V. Members of the Legislative Council brought before the Council shall not maintain their voting privileges during their hearing, and quorum shall then be reduced appropriately under such circumstances.
- B. Student Services Committee:
 - I. This committee shall have the duty of studying, on its own initiative or upon referral by other agencies within the Student Government Association, any and all programs, events, projects, and institutions affiliated with the University of Memphis, and which are not under the jurisdiction of another Senate committee, and shall be charged with filling reports on a regular basis concerning its findings, recommendations, and draft legislation.
- C. Outreach Committee:
 - I. This committee shall have the duty of planning, coordinating, and implementing programs, initiatives, and events on behalf of the Student Government Association. It shall be responsible for developing strategic outreach efforts that increase student engagement, promote organizational visibility, and strengthen partnerships within the University community. The committee shall provide regular reports concerning its initiatives, collaborations, and recommendations for future programming.
- D. SGA Finance Committee:
 - I. This committee shall have the duty of reviewing, evaluating, and making decisions concerning student organization funding requests submitted to the

Student Government Association. It shall be responsible for ensuring equitable and responsible allocation of available funds and for providing student organizations with access to financial resources in accordance with established guidelines and policies. The committee shall file reports on a regular basis concerning funding decisions, budget oversight, and related legislation.

Section 2: Committee Selection

- A. By the end of the first meeting of each new General Assembly, each Senator shall submit in writing their first and second choices of service for a committee.
- B. These choices shall be reviewed by the Speaker who shall then confirm Senators to their respective committees.

Section 3: General Committee Provisions

- A. Each committee chair shall have the duty of reporting in detail to the Senate the activity that has transpired within the committee.
- B. Each committee shall file a committee report with each bill that it considers. Any bill not brought to the floor within seven (7) days of the committee's consideration shall be subject to being called from the committee by a majority affirmative vote by the Senate.
- C. No special or ad-hoc committee shall be appointed when there is a committee on the same subject. Any Senate committee may, by majority vote, create ad-hoc committees to deal with designated subjects within the scope of matters that may be considered by said committees.
 - a. The Executive Council shall appoint the members and name the chairman of the ad-hoc committees.
- D. All senators should be present during the Committee meetings and shall not miss more than three (3) meetings per semester during the regularly scheduled academic calendar.

ARTICLE V: SENATE PROCEDURES

Section 1: SGA Rules Manual on Legislative

The SGA Rules Manual shall be the official guideline for all Senate procedural matters not

otherwise listed in the Senate By-Laws.

Section 2: Quorum

- A. One half (1/2) plus one (1) of the Student Senate membership shall constitute a quorum necessary to conduct business.
- B. A quorum is necessary to conduct any business except to adjourn or recess.
- C. If at any time a Senator feels that there is not a quorum present, it is their duty to request a quorum call. The Speaker of the Senate shall immediately ascertain whether a quorum is present. If there is not a quorum, all businesses must stop until quorum can be obtained.
- D. Quorum during summer meeting shall be defined as one half (1/2) plus one (1) of the Senators living in Memphis Metropolitan Area during the summer months.

Section 3: Reprimand, Censure, and Impeachment

- A. Reprimand
 - I. If any Senator is thought to have violated any laws or rules concerning attendance, conduct, or other internal matters, a written reprimand may be issued by the Legislative Council by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the members of the Legislative Council.
 - II. Any Senate officer who receives more than two (2) written reprimands shall immediately forfeit their position.
- B. Censure
 - I. If any Senator is deemed to have violated any laws or rules concerning attendance, conduct, or other internal matters, that Senator may be issued a censure hearing by the Legislative Council by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present.
 - i. If a two-thirds (2/3) vote is met, then the Senate must immediately confirm the censure with a two-thirds (2/3)

majority vote of members present.

ii. The official procedure for a censure hearing shall be outlined
by the Senate Rules Manual.

II. Any Senator who is censured may not vote or be heard in any Senate
meeting as set forth by the Legislative Council.

III. All censures expire at the end of the current General Assembly.

C. Impeachment

I. If articles of impeachment have been brought forth against any
member of SGA, the Senate shall conduct an impeachment hearing as
outlined in the Senate Rules Manual and Executive By-Laws.

II. Official impeachment procedures not otherwise outlined in the Senate
By-Laws shall be listed in the Senate Rules Manual.

ARTICLE VI: TRAVEL FUND AWARD PROCEDURE

Section 1: TISL (Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature) and MMUN (Model United Nations) shall receive up to one hundred percent (100%) funding and be exempt from Article VI Section 4, subsection E and Article VI Section 2, subsection D.

Section 2: Travel Fund Allocation

- A. Fifty percent (50%) of the travel fund shall be allocated for the Fall semester.
- B. Fifty percent (50%) of the travel fund shall be allocated for the Spring semester.

C. Money not apportioned in the Fall shall roll over to the Spring
Section 3: Travel Fund Application Requirements

- A. Request for international travel must be submitted eight (8) weeks prior to the travel date. International travel may not be considered on a consent slate.

- I. Late requests may not be considered.
 - II. Requests for international travel shall be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the department head or RSO Advisor/Campus Sponsor.
- B. Requests for Domestic travel must be submitted at least fifteen (15) business days prior to travel.
 - I. Late requests may not be considered.
- C. The Secretary of Finance shall honor no more than one application per student per academic semester.
 - I. A student may travel more than once per year if he is a member of more than one organization receiving assistance.
 - II. An application may only be made in their name once per academic semester.
- D. All applicants are required to submit an itemized budget at the time of filing their application to request assistance.
- E. All applicants may be required to attend a meeting with the Secretary of Finance.
 - I. Requests shall only be considered during the academic year in which the travel will occur, unless there is no viable opportunity for the request to be heard prior to travel that semester.
- F. Any applicant who receives unfavorable recommendation from the Secretary of Finance has the option to request consideration by the Executive Council.
 - I. The applicant shall make said request, in writing, to the Secretary of Finance.

Section 4: Eligible Travel Fund Recipients

- A. Only recognized student organizations shall be eligible for funding as an organization.
- B. Dependent on the availability of funds, travel allocations shall be made for the following:
 - I. Students or organizations making academic presentations that will bring positive recognition to The University of Memphis.
 - II. Students or organizations attending leadership conferences that will bring positive recognition to The University of Memphis.
 - III. Students attending a conference, seminar, or symposium relative to their field of study

Section 5: Travel Fund Award Restrictions

- A. Any student receiving credit from a class by traveling is ineligible for travel funds assistance.
- B. There shall be no retroactive funding.
- C. The Secretary of Finance of the Student Government Association reserves the

right to award or not to award travel funds based on the guidelines, the trip, and the welfare of the student body.

- D. Maximum funding from the Student Government Association shall be limited to \$600 per student per request, above 600 will be considered as a special circumstance towards a detailed request labeling out the needs of more.
- E. The Student Government Association shall not pay for advisors.
- F. The Student Government Association shall not pay for expenses incurred by people who are not students at The University of Memphis.

ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

- A. Amendments shall be considered passed by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Senate membership present at any meeting of the Senate.

Section 3.

- A. Said amendments shall take effect immediately upon passage, pending Executive Council approval. Copies of the newly revised, amended, and adopted by-laws must be available to the Senators by the next scheduled Senate meeting after passage.