

Towson University
Student Government Association



Standing Rules of Order

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Article I

Scope and Precedence

The Standing Rules of Order shall be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Towson University Student Government Association, hereinafter referred to as SGA. Should there be any amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws that will affect this document, the rules established in this document will be null and void.

The Standing Rules of Order, hereinafter referred to as SRO, shall be under rule of the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order. The General Assembly shall follow the rules established to ensure efficient business, as well as fair practice. These rules, shall supersede the rules established in Robert's Rules of Order.

Article II

Organization and Officers

Section One: Presiding Officer

The SGA Vice President shall be the Presiding Officer of the Student Senate from the beginning of General Assembly until Unfinished Business. The Presiding Officer of the Student Senate shall be the SGA President Pro-Tempore, from Unfinished Business to the conclusion of the General Assembly. Should the SGA President Pro-Tempore be unable to attend the General Assembly, the Government Operations Chair shall be the Presiding Officer. Should neither the President Pro-Tempore or the Government Operations Chair be able to attend the General Assembly, the Appropriations Chair shall be the Presiding Officer. Should none of the prior be in attendance, the Vice President shall preside.

In the event that senate leadership and vice president are not present at GA and special sessions, the Student Senate shall elect a temporary Presiding Officer through an internal election until a new Presiding Officer is elected.

- A. The Presiding Officer shall:
 - a. Oversee the proceedings of the Student Senate during General Assembly;
 - b. Issue requests for motions;
 - c. Preserve and maintain order and decorum during sessions of the General Assembly:
 - i. If a member of the General Assembly violates any of these rules in the SRO, the Presiding Officer shall call the member to order;

1. Should the member continue to disrupt General Assembly they may be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.
 - ii. All questions concerning order and decorum shall be determined by the Presiding Officer without debate;
 - iii. Non-members of the General Assembly are subject to a two-strike policy for disturbances at the discretion of the Presiding Officer
- d. Determine the following in regard to individual points or motions:
 - i. Rule them out of order, when intended to cause delay, or obstruct the proceedings of the General Assembly;
 - ii. Rule them out of order when failing to adhere to the SRO.
- e. Not actively or passively sway the votes of the Student Senate, unless the motion on the floor is on their behalf;
- f. Vote in the case of a tie vote;
- g. Publicly announce any Presidential vetoes at the subsequent General Assembly meeting after a veto has been made;
- h. Engage in debate on any motion should the motion be on their behalf.
- i. Oversee the legislative process such as:
 - i. Organizing all legislation;
 - ii. Dispersing necessary meeting materials.

Article III

Meeting Business

Section One: Order of Business

The order of business for a standard meeting shall be as follows:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Fight Song
- C. Roll Call
- D. Approval of the Minutes
- E. Amendments to the Agenda
- F. Guest Speaker(s):
- G. Public Participation/Student Concerns

This time is reserved for members of the public to address the Student Government Association on issues not already appearing on the agenda. A limit of 2 minutes per speaker and 20 minutes per topic shall be enforced, unless otherwise specified by the chair.

- H. Communications:

- a. Advisor's Remarks
 - b. Appropriations Committee
 - c. Government Operations Committee
 - d. Rules Committee
 - e. President
 - f. Treasurer
 - g. Attorney General
 - h. Chief of Staff
 - i. Department of Academic Affairs
 - j. Department of Campus Activities
 - k. Department of Civic Engagement
 - l. Department of Community Outreach
 - m. Department of Communications
 - n. Department of Diversity & Inclusion
 - o. Department of Health and Wellness
 - p. Department of Higher Education
 - q. Department of Legislative Affairs
 - r. Department of Marketing
 - s. Department of New Student Development
 - t. Department of Student Organizations
 - u. Department of Special Projects
 - v. Towson University North Eastern Representative
 - w. Athletic Affairs Representative
 - x. Greek Life Representative
 - y. University Residence Government Representative
 - z. Transfer Student Representative
 - aa. Freshman Council Representative
 - bb. Office of the Solicitor General
 - cc. Chair, Vice President
- I. Opinion of the Court
 - J. Unfinished Business (Second Reading of Legislation):
 - K. New Business (First Reading of Legislation):
 - L. Announcements:
 - M. Adjournment

Section Two: Details of Daily Business

- A. Call to Order
 - a. Official Business shall begin once the Presiding Officer calls the meeting to order.
- B. Roll Call shall be taken by the Attorney General;
- C. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Minutes from the previous General Assembly or Special Session must be approved at the beginning of the subsequent General Assembly.
 - b. Minutes do not require a motion of approval if there are no edits and no members of the General Assembly oppose the approval; they are assumed to be approved. Should there be edits, there must be a hand vote of a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote of the Student Senate.
- D. Amendments to the Agenda
- a. This time is reserved for members of the Student Senate to rearrange the agenda and to correct any mistakes. This requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass.
- E. Guest Speaker(s)
- a. This time is reserved for any guest speakers, invited by the SGA Vice President, to address the General Assembly.
- F. Public Participation/Student Concerns
- a. This time is reserved for students to express any concerns they have about the SGA, University entities, or policies and procedures. A limit of two (2) minutes per speaker and twenty (20) minutes per topic shall be enforced, unless otherwise specified by the Presiding Officer.
 - b. Should members of the SGA wish to speak about student concerns they must submit them to the SGA Vice President by 3pm on the Monday preceding the General Assembly.
- G. Communications
- a. This time is reserved for SGA officers to report on their progress, any pertinent information regarding their position and/or committee recommendations. This time should be a very brief statement. Should any member of the audience or General Assembly have questions, they may address the respective officer.
 - b. This time is also reserved for Advisors to address the SGA.
- H. Opinion of the Court
- a. This time is reserved for the Chief Justice or designee to report the Judicial Board's decisions on any appeal submitted by members of the SGA or students/student organizations.
- I. Unfinished Business (Second Reading of Legislation)
- a. The Student Senate, including the SGA Vice President, are required to stay for Unfinished Business through adjournment for debate. Cabinet members without check-ins should stay for the entirety of GA or until otherwise dismissed.
 - i. Should there be legislation on Unfinished Business concerning the expertise of a Cabinet, Council, Judicial Board and/or Executive Board member, or be written on their behalf, the Student Senate may request their attendance for questions or testimony.
 - b. Legislation is reintroduced after its First Reading.

- c. The pieces of legislation will have received a recommendation during Communications. Should the legislation not have a recommendation, Senate Rules must be suspended or the bill must be left on Unfinished Business to die.
 - d. Legislation on Unfinished Business proceeds in the following order:
 - i. Motioned to be passed or tabled;
 - ii. Seconded;
 - iii. Discussion on the legislation as a whole;
 - 1. Should the piece of legislation have received an unfavorable or favorable with amendments recommendation, the Chair of the respective committee shall explain the reasoning.
 - 2. Should there be any amendments, there must be a motion and a second. An amendment may be amended with a motion and a second. However, there may not be an amendment to an amendment of an amendment.
 - e. Any Legislation passed, with necessary amendments, must be sent to the SGA Administrative Assistant by the Vice President. The SGA President must then sign/veto the bill within five (5) business days after receiving the bill or resolution from the SGA Administrative Assistant. Should the SGA President wish to veto the piece of legislation, they must notify the SGA Vice President and President Pro-Tempore within two (2) business days; the SGA President will then announce the veto at the subsequent General Assembly.
- J. New Business (First Reading of Legislation)
- a. Legislation can sit on the agenda for two weeks, allowing for two readings.
 - b. Upon introduction, the piece of legislation will be referred to its respective committee for a recommendation. This allows time for the committee to meet and the Senators to review the legislation prior to the Second Reading.
- K. Announcements
- a. This time is reserved for members of the SGA or audience members to make announcements about events, or any other pertinent information.
- L. Adjournment
- a. In order for the General Assembly to adjourn, a Senator must move to adjourn and it must be seconded. Adjournment passes with a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote of the Student Senate.

Article IV

Legislation

Section One: Sponsorship

- A. Legislation may be sponsored by any Senator.
 - a. There may be more than one sponsor;
 - b. Should any member or student outside of the Student Senate wish to have legislation written, they must have a Senator write it on their behalf.

Section Two: Types of Legislation

- A. All legislation must be passed by a simple majority vote;
- B. When going through the legislative process the Senator must write one of the following bills, then submit it for legislative review to the Vice President;
- C. Types of Legislation
 - a. SGA Budget Bill: legislation that establishes or modifies the SGA Operating Budget;
 - b. Finance Bill: legislation that authorizes or instructs the expenditure of funds. This includes allocating supplemental funds to budgeted and affiliated organizations;
 - c. Budget Change: legislation that authorizes a change in funds of a student organization's previously approved budget. If the budget change request is less than five-hundred dollars (\$500.00) and is not the third budget change, the Treasurer may approve the request;
 - d. Senate Bill: legislation concerning amendments to official SGA documents or the structure of the SGA, excluding the SGA Constitution;
 - e. Resolution: legislation that establishes the will of the undergraduate student experience and concerning the confirmation of appointees. Additionally, this legislation states the SGA position on State and Federal legislation concerning issues affecting students in Higher Education. Resolutions also concern the nomination of appointees to the SGA;
 - f. Special Resolution: legislation that concerns the impeachment of officers within the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches.

Section Three: Submission

- A. A piece of legislation may be submitted at any time; however, in order to be on the week's agenda, it must be submitted dependent upon committee deadline set by Senate Leadership;
 - a. Once reviewed, it must be submitted to the SGA Vice President and the SGA Administrative Assistant with any pertinent research or materials.
 - b. Once submitted, the SGA Administrative Assistant will number the legislation and then print and distribute it with its associated materials.

- c. Following submission, the piece of legislation will be put onto New Business (First Reading of Legislation).

Section Four: Emergency Legislation

- A. The President Pro-Tempore and/or SGA Vice President may designate “Emergency Legislation,” if such legislation:
 - a. Was submitted after the submission deadline;
 - b. Is on a topic which has become pertinent after the deadline, or will not be relevant by the following General Assembly.
- B. Emergency Legislation may appear on Unfinished Business. However, in order to be passed, Senate Rules must be suspended in order for there to be a committee recommendation.

Section Five: Passage of Legislation

- A. Once Legislation is signed by the SGA President, it will be forwarded to the necessary University Officials:
 - a. Finance Bills, Budget Changes, and Budget Bills will be sent to the SGA Business Services Specialist, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and one will be kept on file by the SGA Administrative Assistant.
 - b. Resolutions, Special Resolutions, and Senate Bills will be sent to the Vice President of Student Affairs and one will be kept on file by the SGA Administrative Assistant.

Section Six: Presidential Veto

- A. The SGA President has the right to veto any Legislation;
- B. The decision to veto must be disclosed to the SGA Vice President within two (2) business days of the veto. The SGA President must announce the veto at the subsequent General Assembly.
- C. When legislation has been vetoed by the President and is returned to the General Assembly, the President’s objections may be read by the Presiding Officer or the President should they wish to do so.
- D. After the reading of the President’s objections, the Student Senate may motion to override the veto with a second.
 - a. After the motion, the President shall further testify their veto. The President may not participate in discussion after their testimony; however, the Senators may ask questions to the President during their debate.

Article V

Points and Motions

Section One: Scope of Points;

- A. The right to make points is reserved to the type of point and appropriate time;
- B. A point may not
 - a. Be made without recognition by the Presiding Officer, unless otherwise specified;
 - b. Interrupt a speaker unless otherwise specified;
 - c. Be inherently debatable.

Section Two: Types of Points

- A. Point of Personal Privilege
 - a. Used to express a personal concern
 - b. May be made by any member of the SGA;
 - c. May respectfully interrupt the speaker, in the case of an emergency.
- B. Point of Order
 - a. Used by a member when they believe the General Assembly or a member of the SGA is violating the Standing Rules of Order;
 - b. Must be made immediately after the infraction and may interrupt the speaker;
 - c. Requires an explanation of the issue from the person making the point, or by the Presiding Officer.
- C. Point of Parliamentary Procedure
 - a. Used when a member of the Student Senate is unsure of proper parliamentary procedure, or is seeking a recommendation on how to proceed;
 - b. The Presiding Officer must answer the question following the point.
- D. Point of Information
 - a. Used by a member seeking more information on a particular topic of discussion;
 - b. Is directed to the Presiding Officer, or member capable of responding to the information correctly;
 - c. In the case of Budget Hearing, the Presiding Officer may direct the question to the student organization(s).
- E. Point of Clarification
 - a. Used by a member to clarify incorrect information.

Section Three: Scope of Motions

- A. The right to make motions is reserved by Senators;

- B. Senators may not make motions:
 - a. During debate unless they are holding the floor;
 - b. Without being recognized by the Presiding Officer;
 - c. During the voting phase of any piece of legislation.
- C. Motions may be opened to discussion when:
 - a. It has been recognized by the Presiding Officer and has received a second from another Senator, also recognized by the Presiding Officer.
 - b. It is legislation on Unfinished Business with a recommendation from committee.
 - c. It is relevant to the discussion on the floor of a motion;
 - d. A motion is no longer open to discussion once it has been voted on or called to question.
- D. A motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before a call to question or a vote and must be recognized by the Presiding Officer;
- E. A motion to override a veto may not alter the legislation or be subject to amendments.

Section Four: Types of Motions

- A. Motion to Adjourn
 - a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority to pass;
 - b. A motion to adjourn may not be made while any other motion is being discussed, unless otherwise specified by the Presiding Officer;
 - c. Must, in the opinion of the Presiding Officer, respect the Order of Business. .
- B. Motion to Amend
 - a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority to pass;
 - b. Used to change the content of legislation or a motion;
 - c. A friendly amendment may be made without a motion if it does not change the overall meaning of the piece of legislation.
- C. Motion to Amend the Agenda
 - a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;
 - b. Must be made during “Amendments to the Agenda;”
 - c. Used to reorder or correct the agenda.
- D. Motion to Call to Question
 - a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;
 - b. Once there has been motion to Call to Question and it has been seconded, debate and/or discussion must immediately end and the Student Senate will move into a vote.
- E. Motion to Censure
 - a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;

- b. Any member may be censured by the Senate for violating the Standing Rules of Order, parliamentary procedures or is bringing disrespect and hostility to the General Assembly;
 - c. A member censured shall lose the right to speak, make points, and make motions for the remainder of the General Assembly.
- F. Motion to Extend or Limit Debate
- a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;
 - b. May be made during any discussion;
 - c. Requires a specific amount of time in the motion.
- G. Motion to Recess
- a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;
 - b. Requires a specific amount of time in the motion;
 - c. Must, in the opinion of the Presiding Officer, respect the Order of Business. .
- H. Motion to Reconsider
- a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;
 - b. A motion to reconsider a vote on any piece of legislation may only be made if:
 - i. If the vote was made without following the Standing Rules of Order;
 - ii. It pertains to a piece of legislation currently on Unfinished Business;
 - iii. A motion to Reconsider:
 - 1. Is debatable only if the new piece of legislation is debatable;
 - 2. May not be reconsidered.
- I. Motion to Table
- a. Requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;
 - b. Senators must give reasoning for tabling a piece of legislation. If there is not a given time, it will be tabled until the subsequent General Assembly;
 - c. Once a piece of legislation has been tabled, it may not be taken up again during that General Assembly.

Article VI

Debate

Section One: General Rules for Debate

- A. Debate occurs:
 - a. Only if the legislation is debatable;
 - b. If there is a Senator in opposition to the motion.
- B. Debate does not occur on:
 - a. Call to Question;

- b. Debate constraints;
 - c. Manner of voting;
 - d. Adjournment.
- C. The Right to Debate is reserved by:
- a. Senators;
 - b. Someone the legislation is written on behalf of, falls within the scope of their duties and responsibilities;
 - c. The President;
 - d. The Vice President;
 - e. The Treasurer, should the legislation deal with student organization funding;
 - f. A member whose position duties and responsibilities are being discussed.
- D. The right to hold the floor is reserved by the person recognized by the Presiding Officer;
- E. No member may:
- a. Hold private conversation during General Assembly;
 - b. Speak during debate on a topic unrelated to debate;
 - c. Make personal references about other members, unless during confirmations or internal elections. The personal references must refer to matters that will inhibit a member from carrying out their duties and responsibilities;
 - d. Use perverse or obscene language;
 - e. Leave the General Assembly without permission of the Presiding Officer, regardless of prior approval of the Attorney General; they must be recognized by the Presiding Officer to leave.
- F. Debate concerning a Presidential veto shall occur if any member objects to the veto.

Article VII

Voting

Section One: Rules of Voting

- A. The right to vote is solely reserved to Senators; however, the Presiding Officer must vote in the event of a tie;
- B. Any piece of legislation or motion, unless otherwise specified by the SRO, shall be passed by a simple majority vote of the General Assembly;
- C. Someone must abstain if:
 - a. They missed parts of the debate;
 - b. They cannot uphold subject neutrality;
- D. Someone may not abstain if they simply do not want to vote on a motion;

- E. The Presiding Officer:
 - a. Shall ensure quorum is present in order to conduct voting;
 - b. Shall ensure all Senators present during voting cast a vote;
 - c. Shall ensure Senators refrain from voting if:
 - i. Their voting privileges have been suspended;
 - ii. They have not undergone SGA training on internal documents if applicable.
 - d. May bar Senators absent from debate for any period of time to abstain.

Section Two: Manner of Voting

- A. Voting on legislation and amendments to legislation shall be done through a hand vote; unless otherwise specified by the Presiding Officer;
 - a. Should the Senate wish to change the manner of voting they must make a motion and it must be seconded. To be passed it must receive a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote.
- B. All other motions shall be done electronically,
 - a. Should the Senate wish to change the manner of voting they must make a motion and it must be seconded. To be passed it must receive a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote.

Section Three: Records

- A. The Director of Communications shall take minutes during all General Assemblies and Special Sessions;
- B. The Director of Special Projects shall maintain and publish voting records.
 - a. All voting records, except for closed meetings, are public.

Article VIII

Attendance and Quorum

Section One: Attendance

- A. A member of SGA is considered absent:
 - a. If they arrive substantially late to General Assembly, determined by the Attorney General;
 - b. They leave early from General Assembly without prior approval of the Attorney General;
 - c. They are absent for all or a large portion of the General Assembly.

Section Two: Quorum

- A. Quorum shall be set as two-thirds [2/3] of the current amount of Senators holding positions;
- B. Quorum must be met to conduct any business concerning legislation;
- C. Should Quorum not be met during Budget Hearing, all votes shall be considered a recommendation to be voted on at the subsequent General Assembly or Special Session.

Article IX

Appealing Decisions

Section One: Appealing Decision of Presiding Officer

- A. A decision of the Presiding Officer may be appealed should it be supported by at least three (3) other members of the General Assembly;
- B. During the appeal, the representative will express their reasoning for appeal. Debate may not extend past two (2) minutes per representative.
- C. The motion to appeal a decision requires a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote to pass;

Article X

Amendment & Ratification

The Standing Rules of Order shall be a supplemental document that specifies General Assembly Proceedings to maintain order and efficiency when conducting business. The SRO shall be ratified by a two-thirds [2/3] majority vote of the Student Senate.

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